

THE SCREAM FACTORY

The Magazine of Horrors Past, Present, and Future
Issue #15 \$5.95 U.S. / \$6.95 Canada

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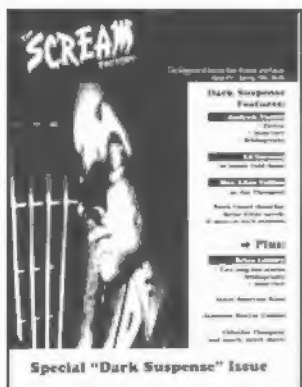
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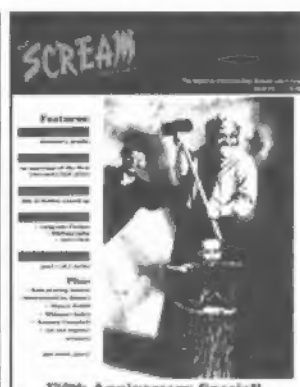
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The Scream Factory

Issue # 15, Autumn, 1994

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Ratings System

●	Bomb
★	Poor
★★	Fair
★★★	Good
★★★★	Excellent

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Subscriptions and address changes: should be sent to: P.O. Box 2808; Apache Junction, AZ 85217.

Submissions: should be sent to: 16473 Redwood Lodge Rd., Los Gatos, CA 95030. Queries & submissions may also be sent via electronic mail to any of the following addresses: CompuServe - 73030,1317; America OnLine - Lord Buck; EWorld - BMorrish. Submission policy: No responsibility is taken for unsolicited manuscripts; please query first. TSF is closed to all fiction submissions; non-fiction and art submissions are actively sought. All manuscripts must be accompanied by an SASE; computer disk (Mac & PC format; any word processor or ASCII format) submissions are encouraged. All letters sent to TSF become the property of Deadline Press and are assumed available for publication unless otherwise stated. This magazine was produced on a Macintosh Quadra 700 using QuarkXpress, PhotoShop, Word, Ofoto, and OmniPage.

Postmaster: send address changes to Deadline Press, P.O. Box 2808; Apache Junction, AZ 85217.

Behind the Gates of the Factory

Welcome to issue #14 of *The Scream Factory*. If this is your first glimpse inside our doors, we hope you enjoy your first shift in the factory. *TSF* is currently alternating between "theme" issues and wide-ranging potpourri issues; as you've likely gathered from our cover (featuring a beautiful original illustration courtesy of Paul Sonju), this is one of our themed issues, with overviews of werewolves in all forms of media: novels, short fiction, films, television, comics, and more.

For a classic creature, the werewolf has been somewhat maligned, and has lagged far behind his contemporary, the vampire, in popularity. Why? Well, part of the vampire's universal appeal is certainly due to the multi-layered nature of vampire lore, which often encompasses issues such as sexuality, control, and so on. But I would also argue that the imbalance in the two creatures' popularity can partially be attributed to the fact that the werewolf is a distinctly rural figure in an increasingly urban world.

With the exception of a few works—such as Whitley Strieber's *Wolfen*—werereatures are typically placed in remote surroundings: the moors of England; the swamps of the American South; the deep forests of various countries. Contrast that with the vampire. Dracula, the icon of his type, may have started out in the wilds of Transylvania, but before you know it, he's ensconced in Carfax Abbey, in the midst of bustling London. Given their ability (in the typical incarnation) to ingratiate themselves with society, vampires naturally gravitate towards population centers—and, after all, that's where their food source can most plentifully be found. Werewolves, on the other hand, are answering a call of the wild, and while often displaying a ferocious hunger, are not singularly dependent upon finding sustenance while in their beastly form—not to mention the fact that humans are not a necessary part of their diet; various animals will do just as nicely, thank you very much. And, with more people than ever living in metropolitan areas, it's hard for urban residents to be *truly* frightened by a creature that's so displaced from their daily lives. Vampires, on the other hand, could be anywhere...your new next-door neighbor, for instance—he's so pale, and his incisors look so pointed...

Enough theorizing. Before leaving the topic of werewolves, I'd also like to mention the unfortunate absence from the pages of this issue of two of the foremost scholars on werewolf fiction—Richard Dalby and Brian Frost. Both were invited to contribute to this issue, and both professed a desire to do so, but prior commitments forbade it. Although I sincerely regret being unable to include Mr. Dalby and Mr. Frost in this issue, I think you'll agree that our other contributors have done a superlative job of covering the topic in their stead. I should also note that Dalby will be contributing to our upcoming special issue on British horror (#17), and that we're hoping to list Frost among our future contributors as well.

Moving along...we're continuously attempting to define just exactly what *The Scream Factory* is all about, both in order to chart our course more accurately, and in order to convey to potential readers what our mission is. With that in mind, I recently came across an article in *Foundation* #60 (Spring, 1994) by Gary Westfahl, entitled "The Undiscovered Country: The Finished and Unfinished Business of Science Fiction Research and Criticism" which seems to summarize the *TSF* mindset. Westfahl's remarks may be geared towards science fiction, but I believe they apply to horror and related genres as well.

"Personally, I would rather read articles about books and authors I have not read than articles about books and authors I know well, and I would rather read articles that range broadly over the entire field of science fiction than articles that exhaustively illuminate the idiosyncracies of individual authors...I have to believe that literary scholars will someday wish to abandon the familiar and boring environs of their self-constructed canons and venture into the undiscovered country of science fiction."

Personally, I couldn't agree more with this sentiment, and I think that it sums up *TSF's* approach quite well.

If you enjoy this issue of *The Scream Factory*, we hope you'll keep an eye out for future issues—#16 is due out in late January, and #17 will be coming your way in mid April. Make sure that your favorite retailer is carrying *TSF*, or better yet, refer to the subscription ad on page 144 to make sure that you don't miss an issue. Thanks for your support, and please watch your step while in the Factory!

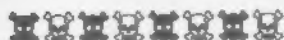
Regards,

Bob Morrish
October 17, 1994

Thanks for sending a copy of *The Scream Factory* #14, featuring the mammoth write-up on Vertigo's first 18 months. I was impressed with its detail and thoroughness, and though I wouldn't agree with every word printed, it was a fair appraisal of the imprint's performance.

One important note I'd like to mention: Peter Milligan and the *Shade, The Changing Man* series are continuing to be published on a monthly basis. For a very short time (coinciding with the time I was interviewed for the article), Peter was planning on leaving the series. But he thankfully had a change of heart, and we're happily still publishing one of Vertigo's best.

Karen Berger
Executive Editor - Vertigo
DC Comics



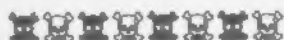
Received a few weeks ago issue #13 of *The Scream Factory*, which I've been glancing at quite frequently, and which looks to be the issue I'd have contributed to if I hadn't had two books about to perch like albatrosses on my neck; which they have.

John Clute
London, England



Here's my renewal check for another year of *The Scream Factory*. Keep up the good work; issue #13 was terrific.

Gordon Van Gelder
New York, NY



...I enjoyed issue #14 of *The Scream Factory* immensely, particularly the western/horror piece and the Hugh Lamb article as well. It was in the Lamb piece that I saw a name familiar to me: R. Chetwynd-Hayes. I remember reading everything of his I could get my hands on and communicating with him via the mails (I still have some of that correspondence around here—someplace). Chetwynd-Hayes had the unique talent to induce laughter and terror—simultaneously. Perhaps you should do a piece about humor in the horror genre, a blend that is rare but one which work fabulously when crafted by a master like Chetwynd-Hayes.

It occurs to me that some masters of the genre were totally devoid of humor (Lovecraft, for instance), while some could work horror and humor as both sides of a story; Bloch's comment about the heart of a young boy—"here, in a jar on my desk"—comes to mind.

John Dinan
Topsfield, MA

Thanks for the kind words, John. Although we don't have any-

thing on "horror and humor" planned in the near future, you should be happy to learn that—coincidentally enough—we'll be featuring R. Chetwynd-Hayes in the TSF BiblioFile section for our British Horror issue (#17). Don't miss that issue, or you'll miss a Chetwynd-Hayes story, interview, and bibliography.



I enjoyed the second installment of Shawn Danowski's series on radio horror, but there are some factual errors in the article that need to be amended:

1. *Lights Out* was only broadcast at midnight in its first year (when it was still just a Chicago local show). After it went on the NBC network, it was aired at 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday nights (though, of course, listeners on the East Coast would have heard it at 12:30). Still, the point is well-taken that it was not meant to be heard by the younger set.

2. The story which Danowski identifies as "The Sickest" is actually entitled "I'm Hungry." It was never broadcast on *Lights Out*, but was written for an LP album (*Drop Dead!*) which Arch Oboler produced for Capitol Records in 1962. I believe the person performing the monologue was not Peter Lorre but radio actor Forrest Lewis, who was famous for his Lorre imitation.

3. Arch Oboler never personally introduced the Chicago *Lights Out* program. (That was done by actor Boris Aplon.) Oboler only appeared on the 1942-43 series. Only

two shows are known to exist from the Chicago series: "Cat Wife" and "The Dream" (both with Karloff).

4. Boris Karloff was the *only* guest star on the Chicago *Lights Out* series, appearing for five consecutive weeks in March and April of 1938 to celebrate the show's fourth anniversary.

5. The 1947 *Lights Out* revival was broadcast in the summer, not the fall. It lasted a mere four weeks.

6. Neither "Bathysphere" nor "Rocket from Manhattan" were ever broadcast on *Lights Out*. Both appeared only on Arch Oboler's *Plays* ("Bathysphere" on 11/18/39, "Rocket" on 9/20/45).

7. The original title of "The Hungry Ones" was "Meteor Man." Oboler inexplicably retitled most of his *Lights Out* scripts when he syndicated them in the 1970's in a package called *The Devil And Mr. O*.

8. "The Coffin In Studio B" and "The Ghost On The Newsreel Negative" were not Oboler scripts. They were written by Wyllis Cooper and originally broadcast in 1934-35. The recordings that exist of these scripts are from the 1946 revival series.

9. There were two separate *Hermit's Cave* series. The first one began in 1935 on WJR in Detroit and ran at least through the mid-Forties. It was sponsored for much of its run by Olga Coal. Most of the extant recordings are from this series. The second series was produced on the West Coast in the early Forties by KMPC in Beverly Hills. It re-utilized scripts from the original series and featured John Dehner (in one of his first

Letters to The Factory

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America OnLine: Lord Buck

radio roles) as The Hermit.

Mike Ogden
Tallahassee, Florida

Shawn replies:

Mike make a number of good points, and highlights a few asinine errors I made while transferring the article from rough draft to finished product. Some of the points Mike brings up were items I had seen repeated numerous times, and thus I was fairly certain that they had some degree of accuracy to them. In writing this installment, I was using various reference sources from the past 25 years—including books, articles, and people—but such second-hand research has the usual problem: just because it's been written in stone does not mean it is so. In between the time I submitted the article and when it saw print, I learned otherwise concerning some of the same facts that Mike corrects. Mike's letter saves me the trouble of correcting myself at the end of installment number 4, so a tip of the hat to him, and I can only add "where were you when I was writing the thing?"

The points Mike makes—and which were to be corrected at the end of the 4th installment—include numbers 1,3,4, and 5. Points 3 and 5 were careless errors on my part. Number 8, however, was news to me. Number 6 does not surprise me: both of these shows in my collection have had *Lights Out!* openings and closings placed on them, perhaps as part of the *Devil & Mr. O* series. I was well aware that many of the *Lights Out!* shows in my possession were really *Arch Oboler Plays* altered for syndication, but I was operating under the assumption that Oboler had restaged these two episodes on *Lights Out!*

On the other points, taking them by number:

2. I do not possess the actual LP, but rather a tape of it. I assumed that "I'm Hungry" was entitled "The Sickest" because, on that LP, Oboler cites the titles of the other excerpts (such as "The Dark") just before each excerpt. So when he said, "...here is some of the sickest...", I thought he was referring to the title of the upcoming excerpt and not describing its content. And I thought "I'm Hungry" was a *Lights Out!* broadcast at one point because *Drop Dead!* is a compilation and a number of the other excerpts contained on it were abbreviated versions of classic *Lights Out!* broadcasts. No one could say otherwise when I inquired about this matter. Mike says he "believes" the actor is Forrest Lewis. He sure sounds like Peter Lorre to me, and that is why I mentioned him.

7. True, but my use of "The Hungry Ones" was deliberate and, to my way of thinking, for good reason: I have never seen anyone who sells these programs list this show under its original title. In writing this article, it is my hope that maybe some non-radio horror fans will be motivated to listen to some of these shows. I did not want people searching for "Meteor Man" when it is being sold as "The Hungry Ones." Oboler did indeed retitle many of his *Lights Out!* broadcasts, and I opted to stick with those retitlings.

9. I had long heard about the existence of two *Hermit's Cave* series, but since no one could say for certain (and since the reference works were tilted towards KMPC), I opted to cite that station. As I stated in the article, however, the series had to have begun long before 1940 in order to achieve 404 broadcasts by wartime. Mike's information is interesting because I have been told slightly different facts: the Detroit series began in 1934, not 1935, ran continuously until 1947, and was revived for an unspecified period of time beginning in 1950. Radio historian Jim Harmon, quoted in a letter sent to me from a fellow "old time radio" researcher, states that the series was "syndicated to stations in script form, so many local sta-

tions did local productions. However, because of its control location, "clear channel" status, Detroit station WJR could be heard all over the US when the weather was right, and was the most famous. Script syndication was an early system used mostly in the '20s and early '30s. The *Hermit's Cave* series must have been one of the last." Mike is correct in his information, though no one could give me a definite answer when I was writing the article, so I dropped mention of WJR. But I suspect his information is not the whole story. There may very well have been some *Hermits* on other stations around the US. Not entirely different episodes, just different productions using the Detroit station's scripts.



Enclosed is a check for all back issues available and a subscription starting with #14. Judging from issue #13, it's my kind of mag and I've missed too much already, and have much to catch up on.

Keep up the good work.

Forrest J. Ackerman
Hollywood, CA



...I discovered to my horror that I'd let my subscription to *The The Scream Factory* lapse. I picked up the last couple of issues at a local store, *Realms Of Fantasy*. The magazine just continues to move from strength to strength—in coverage and conception it's far outstripped its similarly-imagined predecessors, in my opinion (e.g., *Horrorstruck*). I hope you enjoy editing it and that it's successful enough to be around a long time.

Michael Morrison
Norman, OK

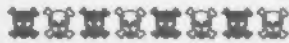


I found *Scream Factory* #14 to be interesting and enjoyable—especially the special section on the mummy. I've just agreed to do a series of articles on the classic motifs of horror fiction for a new UK magazine, *The Dark Asylum*, which might—if successful—extend far enough to get to the mummy. For the record, though, *The Mummy and Miss Nitocris* is misattributed in the list on p. 35 (by virtue of careless reference to *Bleiler's Guide To Supernatural Fiction*); it's actually by George Griffith, whose *Romance of Golden Star* involves a South American "mummy." If the execrable *Bella Lugli* deserves inclusion, then so does Arlton Eadie's *Carnival of Death*, which appeared as an early UK paperback in the '30s. If *Gautier's Romance of a Mummy* (in which the mummy merely serves as an inspiration for a lush historical romance) qualifies for entry, surely John Knittel's *Nile Gold* also warrants consideration—it's easily the best of the "Egyptian revenant" novels...

Brian Stableford
Reading, England

What I want to know, Brian, is where were you when we were desperately seeking writers for our mummy section? We could have

used you! Seriously, thanks for the corrections/additions—although we try to make our overview articles as complete and accurate as possible, there are always a few that we miss...



Enclosed is my renewal check for another four issues of TSF. I enjoy TSF so much that if at some point in the future I fail to renew, you can safely assume I have died.

I really enjoyed the Mummy features in #14, and as always, the Late Show, Small Press Box, numerous reviews, etc. My favorite issue, however, is still "The Worst of the Horror Genre" (#10). A classic!

For future TSF issues, how about a review of the best haunted house movies, books, and comics? I know this has been done to death, but not from the TSF perspective.

Other features I'd like to see include Barbara Steele movies, Mexico's horror film industry, and Hercules flicks. Keep up the good work.

Thomas Berry,
Tucson, AZ

Thanks, Thomas. The haunted house feature is certainly a good idea, and one that we'll get around to tackling (eventually). The Mexico horror film feature seems likely also, since we're going to do a series of spotlights on horror in foreign countries (beginning with a look at Australia in TSF #16, and Canada in #18).



Let's make this easy:

- 1) Please extend my subscription for another year.
- 2) Do you know who might have for sale a copy of issue #9? (I'm interested in part 3 in the series of Cthulhu Mythos articles.)
- 3) When are you going to do an interview/bibliography on Richard Laymon?
See—that was easy...
Your publication is excellent!

Anthony Zebrowski
Sunrise, FL

We don't know of anyone offhand who's got a copy of TSF #9 for sale, but if perhaps someone reading this will (if so, let us know, and we'll pass word on to Anthony). Incidentally, we're getting enough requests for our out-of-print back issues that we're considering selling photocopied reproductions of these issues (similar to what Paul Ganley did with the early, out-of-print back issues of *Weirdbook*). We hesitate to do this, since it'll entail a fair amount of hassle, and since even if we sell them at our cost, they're likely to be expensive. Nonetheless, if we get enough requests, we'll probably do it...As for the Richard Laymon query—we probably will try to feature him in a future TSF BiblioFile, but we've "back-burnered" the idea for a bit, since we just published a collection by Dick last year, and want to "spread the spotlight" a little bit.



Just finished TSF #14 and found it full of mostly good stuff this time around.

...As usual, Lawrence McCallum did some great work. His article was a thorough examination of mummy movies, although he did miss a couple of films that I'm aware of—THE CAT CREATURE (1973) and TIME WALKER (1982)...

William Gagliani's article was a welcome read as he covered a number of books that I have in my collection but haven't had time to read...Looking over the list of additional mummy novels at the end of the article, I noticed the name Bella Luigi. According to an article in a recent *Paperback Parade*, Bella Luigi was most likely one of the many pen names Carter Brown used for some of his early writings.

...Liked Peter Infantino's article on the mummy in comix. Is it my imagination or was Peter being unflinchingly sarcastic throughout this article? Listen, Mr. Smarty-pants, you better change your attitude or someday you'll hang. Still, since it wasn't my ox being gored, I enjoyed it. However, I do have a bone to pick with him. I always enjoyed the Charlton horror comix, especially the ones that had stories illustrated by Steve Ditko and Sanho Kim.

...Was less impressed with Ken Houghton's article. Instead of talking about the books mentioned, Houghton was more interested in using the stories as a jumping off point for an essay. Vic Ghidalia's anthology was one of my favorites while growing up and I was disappointed that it was barely mentioned...I also think that Houghton was doing a bit of over-intellectualizing. Sometimes a mummy is just a mummy.

...One of the best things in #14 was Bill Crider's roundup of western/horror hybrids. His checklist is going to come in handy. Here are a few other items that may have warranted coverage: the films EYES OF FIRE, THE DEVIL'S RAIN, and several movies by Anthony Hix; the novels *Danger On Panther Peak* (a juvenile by Bill Wallace that sounds suspiciously like *The Track of the Cat*) and *Night Things* (Tom Monteleone); the comic series *Weird Western Stories* (from DC, and where Jonah Hex got his start).

...Shawn Danowski's series installment on horror on the radio was another welcome bit. This is one of those articles that makes me wish I had more money and more time...by the way, tell Mr. Danowski that Arch Oboler had at least one horror novel published. From its blurbs, *House of Fire* (Dell, 1970) sounds like a cross between *The Exorcist*, *The Bad Seed*, and a typical Gothic.

...Thomas Deja's article on Young Adult horror was a welcome sight. I've been getting really tired of the "demonization" of young adult horror novels and writers...Deja might be interested in an anthology that was published a couple of years ago called *Thirteen*, which featured original stories by the top YA names, such as Pike, Stine, Hoh, and Kiel Stuart...Perhaps in the future we'll see TSF publish more detailed looks at juvenile horror lines such as *Twilight*, *Dark Forces*, *Nightmare Club*, etc.?

...May I ask a question? What the hell ever happened to your *What The Hell Ever Happened To...* column. Assuming it returns, here's a few suggestions for future topics for this column: Jack Younger (who put out about a half-dozen horror novels in the early '70s); John Haikin, John Christopher, your *Fabulous Magazines of Monsterland* column, my life.

Mark Louis Baumgart
Ortonville, MI

Rumors 'n' Ruminations

by
Marshall Probe

As most of you have heard by now, Jeanne Cavelos, the World Fantasy Award-winning Dell editor who founded the successful Abyss horror line and the just-launched Edge trade paperback line, has resigned to take a teaching post at St. Anselm College in Manchester, NH. Cavelos attributed her resignation to a strong dislike for living in New York and a desire to move onto other things, including her own writing. She was at Dell for six years.

Leslie Schur, VP and editor-in-chief at Dell, initially reported that Dell was seeking a replacement, but it's subsequently become clear that Dell plans to kill the Abyss line; the fate of the Edge line is less clear, but could depend upon sales of the first couple of books bearing the Edge imprint. Dell does plan to publish all titles acquired by Cavelos prior to her departure.

Author T.E.D. Klein, whose writing skills are outdone only by his frustratingly slow creative pace, recently gave up the editorial reins at *Sci-Fi Entertainment*, the Sci-Fi Channel's magazine. Klein reportedly stepped down because the post was taking too much time away from his writing, so one can only hope that he's finally making some headway on his new novel, *Night-town*, the rights to which he sold (based on a six-page outline) to Viking five loong years ago.

And for those who care, Klein was replaced at *Sci-Fi Entertainment* by Bob Martin, one of the original *Fangoria* editors.

Richard Preston's *The Hot Zone* has proven to be a particularly hot commodity. The book, which was published by Random House in September, is based upon an article that Preston wrote for the *New Yorker*, concerning runaway deadly viruses. The book centers on a virus unleashed by rain forest destruction and inadvertently introduced into a Virginia laboratory by research monkeys. Although it's non-fiction, it's said to be a great and frightening read.

Subsidiary rights to the book have moved briskly, including Random taking a \$162,500 floor on the paperback rights, and foreign editions selling in England, Germany, Brazil, Italy, Denmark, France, Japan and Spain. However, the *real* story here involves the hotly contested film rights. In a spirited battle, producer Lynda Obst won film rights, outbidding Ridley Scott (who was subsequently retained by Obst to direct the film) and Arnold Kopelson who, upon losing out, promptly commissioned a screenplay entitled *OUTBREAK*, utilizing a similar theme, obtained backing from Warner Brothers, and lined up Dustin Hoffman for a starring role. Ironically, the Obst/Scott production of *THE HOT ZONE* has since collapsed, as proposed stars Robert Redford and Jodie Foster both pulled out of the project.

Since we've seen multiple revivals of *The Twilight Zone*, isn't it about time that we saw a revival of *The Outer Limits*? Apparently Show-

time thinks so, as they began shooting in August for a planned February roll-out of the new show.

Here's news on a couple of new small press horror mags, both of which will be strictly fiction-oriented. Mike Baker, editor/publisher of the *Afraid* newsletter, debuts the bi-monthly *Skull* in October, while Jesus Gonzalez and Buddy Martinez, former editor/publishers of the unfortunately short-lived *Iniquities*, brought out the first quarterly issue of *Phantasm* in August.

Since this is our special werewolf issue, it seems only appropriate to mention that Edo Van Belkom, a fairly well-known presence in the small press over the last few years, is writing *Wyrn Wolf*, a horror/mystery novel based upon the *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* game from White Wolf Games. Although White Wolf recently launched its own fiction line—featuring original anthologies along with reprints of Tom Monteleone's *Borderlands* anthology series—Van Belkom's book will be published by HarperPrism.

If you're going to make the plunge into book publishing, there's nothing like having an inaugural book that's guaranteed to be a success to help cushion your landing.

Britton Trice, owner of New Orleans' Garden District Book Shop, landed exclusive rights to publish

Screamers

- *New book publishers joining the fray.* Eyeing potential market opportunities (see Reamers), a couple of role-playing game companies and several new small presses have thrown their hats in the horror/suspense ring.
- *The X-Files second season.* Sure they're hoary old chestnuts of plots—and a pox on mainstream reviewers for not recognizing this—but they're still lots of fun, even with minimal appearances by the preppers Scully.
- *A big autumn from horror's big names.* With books appearing or due soon from King, Rice, Koontz, and Barker, this fall should offer some great reading and perhaps some welcome publicity for the genre.

two limited editions of Anne Rice's new novel *Taltos*. The two editions—a 26 copy lettered and signed state retailing for \$350, and a 500 signed and numbered state going for \$150—have sold extremely well for Trice, with the lettered state already out of print.

Trice's proximity to Rice—his shop is six blocks from her home—undoubtedly was the deciding factor in his garnering limited edition rights. No word on whether Trice plans to expand his publishing ventures beyond those bearing Rice's bestselling name.



Speaking of Ms. Rice, she recently took out a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* in order to let everyone know that she didn't really mean it—nope, she was only kid-

ding, and takes it all back—when she blasted the casting of Tom Cruise as the vampire Lestat in the long-awaited film version of Rice's *Interview With The Vampire*.

More accurately, Rice indicated that she'd been won over by Cruise's performance and by director Neil Jordan's handling of the film in general.

Rice has waited 17 long years to see her work on the big screen, but this pales beside the wait endured by the late Robert Heinlein, who died while waiting for *The Puppet Masters* to make it to the big screen—which it finally does this fall, some 43 years after the book came out.



If it seems to you like more and more publishing news is related to video games and CD-ROM titles,

Reamers

- *Further-waning support for horror titles from mass market publishers.* Just when you think the horror market can't get any worse, or the publishing options for writers can't shrink any further, more bad news breaks.
- *Idiotic Stephen King fans.* Seeming to be particularly prevalent on various electronic bulletin boards, these muttonheads refuse to admit that "the King" has ever written a subpar word in his entire life. Get a life!
- *Temporary hiatus.* As in the time off taken by two fine small press magazines, *Cemetery Dance* (due to illness) and *Deathrealm* (due to disagreements over ownership). Get well soon, Rich, and hurry back, Mark.

don't worry—you're not imagining things. The latest genre news of note from this front involves the hot, hot, hot game *Doom*, a dark SF video simulation of interplanetary warfare. Novelization rights to *Doom* recently sold to Pocket Book, which plans a four book series, and film rights were optioned to Universal. The novel (to be written by a yet-to-be-named author) and film will be developed independently, and may wind up being quite different stories.

...And the recently released *Doom II* is already one of the best-selling games ever.



...And while we're on the subject...

Matthew Costello, author of the all-time bestselling CD-ROM game *7th Guest*, and his collaborator of late, F. Paul Wilson (who, you may recall, cashed in to the tune of a mill or so last year when he sold his medical thriller *The Select*) recently secured a sweet \$750,000 for a joint deal with Warner Books and Time Warner Interactive for two combined book-and-interactive game projects. The first, entitled *Mirage* and scheduled for a Christmas release, features two female characters in a contemporary setting, while the follow-up, *The DNA Wars*, is totally hush-hush. Both games will be released simultaneously with hardcover novelizations, to be followed by mass market paperbacks down the line.

Poppy, Poppy, Burning Brite

Just in case there's anyone out there who hasn't already heard this story...bookseller Barry R. Levin recently added to his already, er, *substantial* reputation when he offered for sale three copies of the Cahill limited edition of Poppy Brite's *Drawing Blood* at a cost of \$600 each. Given that the books sported a retail price of \$60, you may wonder 'why the markup?'

Well, it seems these three copies of the book were in a private post office box at Westwood Mall Services in Los Angeles last December when a former customer entered the store with a container of gasoline, and for reasons unknown, set the business and himself on fire. Miraculously the book escaped the blaze unscathed—save for the fact that they now sport the distinct odor of burned human flesh. Hence their even more limited status and marked-up price.

And the worst news? When this story went out over the AP wire service in early September, it was disclosed that a couple of idiots had already bought two of the three copies for sale. Proving, I suppose, that Levin is the P.T. Barnum of bookselling, recognizing that (to paraphrase) "there's a sucker born every minute."

She Bequeathed Them Her Claws...

The Werewolf
in Literature

up to
1940

by
Laurence
Bust

DERYOK

The literary werewolf took a long time to crawl out of the lower brain onto the printed page. A strange survival, it was born ages ago in the haze of ancient mythology, where each culture had protean gods and shapeshifters that transform into the district's most honored and feared animals. Today, the Russians still have were-bears, the Chinese were-tigers and were-foxes, the Africans and Quechuan Indians of Peru both have were-jaguars. Even the weredog has a significant body of literature, exemplified in a recent anthology, Michel Parry's *The Hounds of Hell* (1974), but this is outside the main realm of lupine myth. The wolf is the Western world's supreme symbol of natural evil: ruthless, cunning, swift and fierce. Indeed, it was a wolf-bitch who nursed Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome, the vast empire that wolfed down the known world. In simplest terms, the werewolf in literature is a male or female character who assumes wolf form, either literally, psychically or symbolically. All are ideally suited for remorselessly ravaging the countryside with lust for gore. In more poetic terms, its food is winter, night and death.

The amount of written works about werewolves is enormous. In text, the werewolf first appeared in the Roman era, as early as Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and

Petronius's *Satyricon* (circa 60 A.D.). The common theme of person into wolf makes it hard to say where mythology ends and fiction begins. Peter Haining anthologized a 12th century Irish account, *The Man-Wolf* by Giraldus Cambrensis, which reads like an acceptable but antique short story. Beyond the early legends, there are literally thousands of documented, factual cases of werewolfism right up to the current day. The mass of evidence is so overwhelming that H.R. Wakefield pointed out in "The Death of a Poacher" (1935) that there is more evidence for the existence of werewolves than for the existence of Buddha, Christ and Shakespeare combined. Repressed by a Christian culture that condemned him as a diabolical creature, the modern study of werewolves did not begin until Sabine Baring-Gould's *The Book of Werewolves* ([UK], 1856). Elliot O'Donnell, Montague Summers, Brian Frost, and Charlotte Otten have since added more to Baring-Gould's seminal work. Today, anthropologists, literary critics and linguists continue to dissect the werewolf to reveal the features of this hidden part of the human psyche. As complex as the vampire, the werewolf has unique psychological, morale, and literary aspects.

Despite its universality in legends, the werewolf made few appearances in Western fiction until the 20th Century. The Christians on one paw and the rationalists on the other objected to him. The werewolf's rivals in popular culture—the Frankenstein monster and the vampire—each has their seminal works—*Frankenstein* and *Dracula*—but a survey of the fantastic literature reveals no equivalent for the werewolf. The only major work that even approximates the werewolf theme is *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. It is the familiar story of a Victorian medical man chemically transformed into a "wolf," but only in the vernacular sense of the word: a lustful, hairy, but still human, creature. (Oddly enough, Stevenson wrote a brilliant but little known tale of a female werewolfism described below.) For all its literary obscurity, the early werewolf tales span a wide range of psychological and supernatural phenomena.

The literature revolves around the conventions established in werewolf legends. The three main ways to become a werewolf are: 1) through the Black Arts, which includes the reliable Satanic pact method, 2) by a werewolf bite, or 3) by inheritance from tainted ancestors who probably acquired it from one of the former two methods. The primary rule is that the human turns into a wolf, almost never the other way around. In his wolf form, his muteness utterly alienates him from everyone, and in human form, he rarely has a relationship that can bear the full knowledge of his dark desires. His transformation is never witnessed or described, even if others are present, and the identity of the werewolf cannot be confirmed until his death. Werewolves can be tentatively identified by cruel eyes, hairy palms, peculiar fingers, and the hostile reaction of other animals. Most werewolves can be killed by conventional means, although a vocal minority repeats the Gypsies' silver bullet theory. Above all other means of identification, injuries received as in wolf form show up in human form as well. In fiction, the werewolf has many avatars: the Nordic superwoman, the occult adept who can transform himself at will, the lovesick but inarticulate young man, the offspring of fallen priest and a not-so-innocent young girl, the maker of Satanic pacts, and the heir to the family legacy of hyperactive follicles. Contrary to the popular image, the literary werewolf is often female, even in the earliest tales. Through all the variants, the signature of the werewolf is an oddly modern motif—the eruption of the forbidden impulse. In the freedom of the deserted night, rational man fades and folklore emerges.

The first werewolf tales were fictionalized retreads of this type of lore. Putting aside a rather slight French 1807 play called *Le Loup-Garou* and Montague Summers's claim of werewolfery in *L'Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de M. Oufle* (1710), Peter Haining unearthed the earliest werewolf fiction. It is a short story called "The Severed Arm," that he found in a shilling

shocker published in the 1820s. It has the essential mark of the werewolf story, with the wolf's injury mentioned in the title transfers to his human form to prove his werewolfism. Like legend-based tales to follow, it shows little sympathy for the werewolf but marks him a bad example. A person who strays so far from the social norm will cross to the side of demons.

Other tales scattered throughout the 19th century retell these legends as cautionary tales, as if to justify its demoniac subject. Early American writer, Sutherland Menzies's, "Hugues, the Wer-Wolf" (1838) follows the severed limb tradition of werewolf detection, as does the poem "The Ballad of the Were-wolf" by Graham Tomson (1890). Writers of werewolf fiction are as diverse as poet-bibliomaniac Eugene Field, author of "The Werewolf" (1896) and decadent, drug-addicted Count Eric Stenbock. Many other 19th century werewolf tales were even less distinguished. Some, such as Stanley Weyman's *The House of the Wolf* (circa 1880) contains no werewolf at all, even though the first chapter is promisingly titled "Ware-Wolf!"

Even the elder Alexandre Dumas succumbed the lure of the wolf by writing *Le Meneur des Loups* ([France] 1857, translated, *The Wolf Leader*). Based on a legend Dumas heard as a child, it exceeds the typical 'kill the evil werewolf' saga with touches of gothic shudders and diablerie. It makes a fine revenge tale that would have worked as well without the supernatural. A powerful, sadistic Baron beats the heaven out of the hero, Thibault the sabot maker. In the true tradition of sabotage, Thibault prays for diabolical aid in getting even, and with His usual efficiency, the Infernal One delivers in spades. Thibault gets to command a pack of wolves who joyfully ravage the countryside, and when his bargain reaches its inevitable end, he opts to become a werewolf to stay on this side of the eternal flames. Highly praised by Summers and Bleiler, Dumas' novel is largely forgotten today. Its only appearances in the last 100 years were as a *Weird Tales* serial (8 parts, starting in August, 1931) and as a Prime Press reprint (1950), edited by L. Sprague De Camp.

Not to be outdone by his European counterparts, American author Menzies's "Hugues: the Wehr-Wolf" is notable for its psychological study of the werewolf's inner conflicts. The wolfman, Hugues Wulfic, agonizes over the sinful alternative of suicide to living with the torture of his unclean hunger. In his abject misanthropy, he finds himself in love with one of the town's maidens, Branda, the butcher's daughter. Extorting raw meat from her father to quell his sanguinary tastes, he finds that Branda returns his love, and this gives him the strength to continue his life. Branda loves him despite the lupine desires that threaten to overwhelm his human soul. Apparently, a wolf-man can be saved if he is no longer alone with his horrible secret.

The first werewolf tale that went beyond folklore was a story within a story, the fre-



quently anthologized chapter of Capt. Frederick Marryat's *The Phantom Ship* (1839), usually titled "A White Wolf of the Hartz Mountains" or some variant thereof. On an extended cruise of the Far East, the narrator meets a young man named Krantz who tells a tale of his father's marriage to an icy spirit of the Hartz Mountains, Christina the werewolf. In her unseen transformation to wolf form, she kills Krantz's brother and sister and later exhumes their mangled corpses for leftovers. When the love-blind father finally realizes what his wife is doing, he kills her and escapes to the Low Countries where the avenging spirits destroy him, leaving Krantz on his own. To escape the vengeance of the mountain spirits, Krantz goes off to sea but he has a horrifying precognition of his death that he relates to the incredulous narrator. Krantz is never heard from again. The character Christina with her cruel eyes, cold heart and white fur, becomes the godmother of all female werewolves in print and even perhaps some vampires.

Not to be outdone by Dumas and Marryat, GWM Reynold's thriller, *Wagner: The Wehr-Wolf* (serial 1846-7, book 1857), set the pace for werewolf lore for the rest of century. Analogous to *Varney the Vampire*, it's a sensational adventure story, serialized in a popular magazine with lurid illustrations. A werewolf version of the Faust legend—a theme Reynolds recycled in three other works—the hero becomes a werewolf by making a pact with a strange man who promises wealth and extended youth. Heavily influenced by gothic tales, especially the episodic story within a story novel, Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, the narrative follows the werewolf through an uncaring world in search of the one who will save him by taking his place, just like Melmoth before him. Ultimately, the werewolf is alone with the horror inside him wherever he goes.

The Black Forest, Spain and Scandinavia were the diverse backdrops of three of the most powerful werewolf tales of the 19th Century. These three novellas attack the Victorian convention of frail womanhood, one being written by Robert Louis Stevenson, another by the French writing team, Erckmann-Chatrian and the third by a lesser known young Englishwoman, Clemence Housman. The Erckmann-Chatrian tale uses the history of a fictitious noble family to establish firm credibility with minimal use of the supernatural. Stevenson's "Olalla" (1885) is a tightly

constructed, realistic tale. The ambiguity still leaves no room for doubt that evil of the werewolf exists, even if you reject his supernatural aspect. In Housman's *The Werewolf*, the supernatural is a given, a mystery hidden only by density of flesh and worldly passion.

The earliest of the three, Erckmann-Chatrian's "The Man-Wolf" (1864) is a realistic story of hereditary werewolfism. As family chronicles record it, the nobleman Hugues-le-Loup's lust for a female werewolf compels him to murder his wife, marry the werewolf, and father a race of werewolves. This becomes the House of Nideck, who for generations benignly satisfy their bloodlust by constantly hunting on their ancestral estate. The werewolf mother bequeathed them her claws. The actual transformation from man to wolf only occurs at Christmas and lasts two weeks at the most. This shapeshifting is only slightly apparent when the physician narrator spies the current master of Nideck in the nude, crouching on all fours and howling at the moon. He thinks it's a strange medical problem. Ultimately, the werewolf curse ends with the last Nideck daughter who uncannily resembles the portrait of the murdered first wife of Hugues-le-Loup.

An ancestral taint and a mysterious portrait also play key parts in Stevenson's realistic narrative of a similar inherited curse. "Olalla" begins simply enough with an unnamed narrator, a soldier "wounded in a good cause," seeking recovery in the residencia of an unnamed, noble Spanish family. Forewarned of their reclusive nature, he meets just the son, Felipe, who reveals little of his only two relatives, his mother and sister. As an Englishman, the convalescent narrator passively basks in the sunny, Spanish climate, enjoying the quaint of the old villa, and he falls in love with a portrait of a long dead ancestor. He becomes obsessed with "her face, which was perfectly shaped" and "yet marred by a cruel, sullen and sensual expression." Left on his own, she becomes "the heroine of his daydreams" with the comforting thought that she is "safe in the grave, her wand of beauty broken, her philter split."

All the while, Stevenson builds a picture of the once noble family in moral and mental decay. Felipe's ignorance, the mother's lassitude and emptiness, and the daughter's complete absence suggests unspeakable secrets coupled with the awful animal screams in the night that take the narrator to new depths of horror. Immobilized by fear, he does nothing. Images of degeneration and mental disease finally shatter when the narrator meets the incar-



nation of the person in the portrait, Olalla. During their first brief encounters, neither of them speak but they are as helplessly mute as werewolves. Irresistibly drawn to him, Olalla breaks the silence to beg him to leave her house of evil and corruption. They confess their love for each other. He vows to stay against all her persuasive speeches that warn him against the poison in her blood:

Shall I bind another spirit, reluctant as own, into this bewitched and tempest-broken tenement that I now suffer in? Shall I hand down this cursed vessel of humanity, charge it with fresh life as with fresh poison, and dash it, like a fire, in the faces of posterity?

A minor incident reverses his vow to remain. He cuts himself, and thinking the mother will bind his wound, he offers her his hand, only to have her sink her teeth into it. Like trauma in real life, it seems unreal to him at the time, dream-like, and in this way, Stevenson avoids the transformation problem. Blood-letting brings out the werewolf essence without resorting to any awkward explanations. His love for Olalla survives but under a shroud, and he offers little resistance when Felipe finally carts him off to the village. He stays to find out more about the family, whose history is a story within the story, and he meets Olalla who admonishes him to leave with another deeply emotional speech. In the end, he leaves her to her lonely doom and him to his.

From this sweltering Spanish drama, we move to Clemence Housman's morality play, *The Werewolf*, which features a woman of the frozen waste whose cold kiss means death. Sitting at home during a blustery Norse evening, Sweyn and his family wait for Sweyn's brother Christian to return. Strange cries are heard but they see no one. Finally, a woman appears at their door, briefly described as "living, beautiful, young" and with a "fair face." Known by a crude name in her home territory, the locals appointed her "White Fell" for the white furs she wore. White Fell is a powerful, independent woman, a prototype of the barbaric heroines of many epics to follow, a fur-slitting, axe-wielding huntress descended straight from Hyperborea. Her dress is "half-masculine, yet not unwomanly."

Hated by the resident wolfhound but loved by the less intuitive humans, she strives to be part of the family. Sweyn falls in love with her and thus blinded cannot see what his brother Christian alone sees clearly; she is a werewolf. Two family members mysteriously die the same day after the White Fell kisses them, which is enough to confirm Christian's suspicions. After White Fell gives Sweyn this fatal kiss, Christian doggedly hunts her down in a grueling chase across the frozen hills.

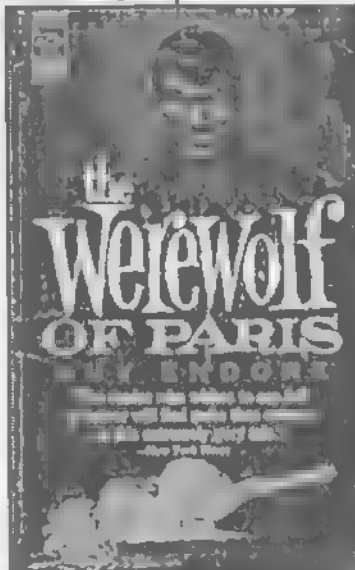
Housman shuns all of the werewolf traditions so dully repeated in many tales written before and after. There are no silver bullets, no howling, no slaughtered farm animals, no red glowing eyes, no wounds

received as wolf appearing on the human form, no feral breath, no returning to human form upon death. Another odd twist is the half-blind Grandmother, Old Trella, who thinks White Fell sounds and appears like her dead daughter, Thora. White Fell is either a revenant from Valhalla or maybe just a good girl gone lupine.

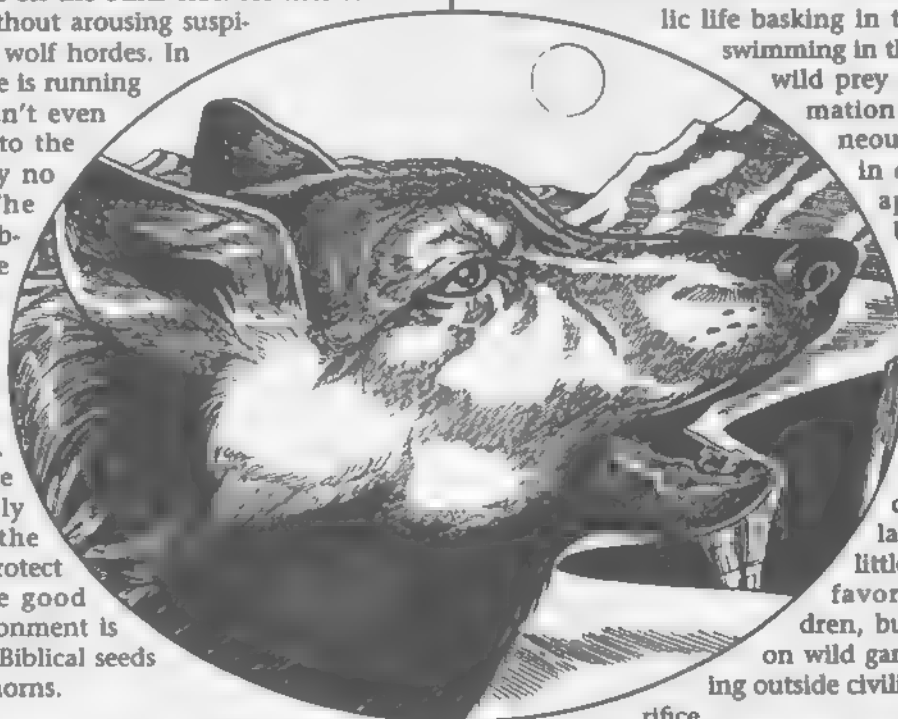
Standing apart from this pack of novellas, the last of the 19th century werewolf books is a major production. The historical romancer Samuel R. Crockett's *The Black Douglas* (1899) features a true monster of the French chronicles, Gilles de Retz. He was a real 15th century Marshall of France who was burned at the stake for criminal necromancy. He became associated with werewolfism for his alleged cannibalism of young children and is often mentioned in occult fiction including Alfred Bill's novel described below. The story begins in Scotland in the dark year 1439. De Retz, a werewolf by virtue of a Satanic pact, visits the Douglas clan on a diplomatic mission and kidnaps their two daughters. He takes them to his French estate where he rules a pack of werewolves with his female companion, Astarte, who prefers to lounge about in her wolf form. Astarte can transform herself into a witch named La Mettraye who acquires children to be sacrificed to Satan in De Retz's Black Masses. Undaunted, the Douglas clan rush to France to rescue their own and slaughter the Satanic wolf pack under a black, lightning veined sky, greatly diminishing the sorcerer population of France. Astarte is stabbed to death in her wolf form and converts to die a human with the hideous stigmata on her chest. This leaves de Retz alone, as all unrepentant werewolves end, the last of the Satanic breed started by Reynolds with his wandering Wagner. More modern views of the werewolf are beginning to lope about.

Strangely enough, one of the better werewolf stories was penned by Bram Stoker, known to the world as the author of *Dracula*. "Dracula's Guest" is the discarded first chapter of that famous novel which was published separately as the title piece of his 1914 story collection. It has Jonathan Harker naively wandering through the misty, unhallowed Transylvanian woods on Walpurgis Night. Of course he is savagely assaulted by creatures that are wolves and yet not wolves. They have the traditional white, gleaming fangs, the gaping red mouth, the hot breath of a wild animal, but again there is no observed transformation. In weird fiction, suggestion is superior to vision. *Dracula* itself is loaded with references to wolves, including the Count's famous reference to them as the children of the night.

Stoker's contemporary Count Eric Stenbock wrote a dream fugue of werewolfism in "The Other Side: A Breton Legend" (1893). An adolescent named Gabriel crosses a Stygian brook, tempted to pick a mysterious blue flower in the witch-haunted woods, called "the other side." In a literary passage of druggish decadent beauty, he finds himself in a dreadful Black



Mass, attended by a sinister leader with a shadowed face and hordes of wolf creatures who are men with wolf heads and/or wolves with human heads. Among them is the beautiful Lilith, who later haunts his fantasies and taunts him with her singing outside his bedroom window. Fortunately, he survives to go to Mass the following morning and thus escapes joining their ranks. The blue flower that started the whole incident turns to ash when it leaves his hands but is restored when he retrieves it. Admonished for his interest in the witch flower and Lilith's nocturnal visits, he decides to keep his obsession with dark things to himself. One morning after a strange incident on the other side, he wakes up in his bedroom without knowing how he got there. On arising, the strangely familiar Lilith greets him at the breakfast table, instead of his mother, and he realizes he is really still on the other side. He tries to find his way home without arousing suspicion of Lilith and the wolf hordes. In his haste, he notices he is running on four paws. He didn't even notice the transition to the wolf state! Apparently no one ever does. "The Other Side" is a disturbing and provocative story. It is well within the werewolf tradition, yet it has an elusive *fin de siècle* quality that suggests more than it explains. Gabriel's innocence cannot wholeheartedly embrace the evil of the wolf, but it does not protect him in the end. The good French Catholic environment is wasted on him as the Biblical seeds scattered among the thorns.



ritice.

Contrary to Christian viewpoint, the werewolf is not always evil. In Scottish occultist Algernon Blackwood's "The Camp of the Dog" (1908), primitive blood and unrequited love create a psychic werewolf. Like the classical werewolf, it only manifests itself at night. A group of five campers on a deserted island in the Baltic off the Swedish coast is nightly visited by a large dog or wolf. Its tracks have a range limited to the camp and an intense search of the tiny island reveals nothing. As in many Blackwood tales, Dr. John Silence, occult detective, is summoned to sort things out. It seems that Peter, a Canadian with a good measure of "red Indian" blood has an amorous, but primitive soul that takes the form of a wolf at night to approach his loved one, a fellow camper who shuns him by day. Dr. Silence demonstrates that his soul or etheric fluid leaves his body at night in a wolf form only visible to the psychically sensitive. While his lupinoid soul is on the prowl, his sleeping body is left behind as a shrunken husk in his tent. Motivated by love and not

blood lust, he does not harm anyone beyond causing a bit of fright. When his beloved finally surrenders to the call of his savage soul, the wolf appears no more.

Also dwelling on the etheric, Oliver Onion's jumpy tale, "The Master of the House" (1929) has a British family gradually discover that their reclusive landlord's servant has acquired some bad habits in India. He "went native" with his membership in a revolting Kali cult where he learned ancient secrets, among them the power to transform himself into a large clay-coloured Alsatian dog. The transformation is purely a psychic projection and like Blackwood and his predecessors, he avoids description of the man to wolf conversion, a mere matter of metaphysics.

An English cousin of Stenbock's naive young Gabriel, Saki's "Gabriel-Ernest" (1910) is an interesting portrait of an adolescent werewolf. Gabriel-Ernest lives an idyllic life basking in the woodland sun and swimming in the lake by day, hunting wild prey at night. His transformation to a wolf is instantaneous. The boy disappears in one spot and the wolf appears in another. Unlike the moralistic horror stories of the 19th Century, the reader is drawn to young Gabriel-Ernest and feels no sorrow when he escapes those who seek to end his natural lifestyle. He complains that his isolated lifestyle gives him little opportunity to eat his favorite dish, young children, but he contents himself on wild game. The freedom of living outside civilization is worth the sac-

The 1920s and '30s saw a surge of werewolf novels that enlarged the scope of the theme. Werewolfery appeared in Leonard Cline's *The Dark Chamber* (1927), a book much admired by H.P. Lovecraft. Even poet Robert Service got in a werewolf yarn, *The House of Fear* (1927), followed by Charles Lee Swern's *The Werewolf* (1928) and mystery writer John Dickson Carr's *It Walks by Night* (Harper, 1930). The most noteworthy was Jesse Kerruish's *The Undying Monster* (1922). The title character is an unseen monster who has tormented and killed various members of the Hammond family for centuries. With two exceptions in the 16th Century, all who see the monster get killed by it or go mad and commit suicide. Prominent psychic experts have been enlisted to fight the creature but with no success. The last ones called in were Madame Blavatsky and Professor Crookes in 1890. Now Oliver and his sister Swanhild are the only remaining Hammonds to face the monster. As the story opens, she rescues him from the monster and decides to call in more psychic help.

Passing over the names of Arthur Conan Doyle and Oliver Lodge, she decides on Luna Bartendale, an unorthodox occult detective, to help them save the day. The story enfold into a tale of theriomorphy, racial memory and Nordic gods.

In a more traditional vein, Alfred H. Bill's adventure *The Wolf in the Garden* (Longmans, 1931; Centaur 1972) takes place in early American. It starts with the arrival of an ex-patriate French nobleman, Le Comte de Saint Loup. Weeks later, his fierce dog arrives. The dog is named De Retz, whom Saint Loup claims is named after Cardinal De Retz, not the notorious blood-drinking sorcerer, Gilles de Retz, who was the antagonist in *The Black Douglas*. Bill establishes a couple of interesting conventions: Saint Loup is never seen with his doppelganger dog/wolf; and an injured werewolf immediately returns to his human form. Saint Loup is a delightfully wicked werewolf, full of lust and spite for mankind. His most prized possession is "a strip of human skin taken from the living body of a beautiful Circassian female slave." He steals the hero's girlfriend, Felicity, and torments both of them with his proposed marriage of convenience that will save Felicity's uncle from financial ruin. Another bizarre character is Vashti the Voodoo conjure-woman, who helps saves the hero from the dreaded werewolf bite. He briefly experiences "the perverted hunger and foul thirst" for the blood and joints of freshly killed game. The author also notes that to carry a piece of a consecrated host is protection against werewolves, but his clergyman character, Sackville, the local occultist and werewolf expert, is so staunchly Protestant that he refuses to allow such hosts to leave the church building, even to provide protection against the forces of evil.

Guy Endore's popular novel *The Werewolf Of Paris* (Farrar and Rinehard, 1933; Avon 1950 [abridged/expurgated]) is yet another example of a story within a story, for the narrator transcribes the case of Bertrand Caillet, a French werewolf active during the Franco-Prussian war. The fruit of a priestly rape, he was born on Christmas Eve. According to Rumanian lore, extensively studied by Harry Senn in *The Werewolf and Vampire in Rumania* (1982), a child conceived or born on Christmas or Easter is evil. Good wives shun their husbands's beds during times that may result in such a wicked birthday. Bertrand also fits the werewolf stereotype with his hairy palms, odd fingers, and howling instead of crying as an infant. Recognizing these signs, his uncle, Aymar, locks him in his bedroom at night on the pretense that it will stop his bad dreams. Bertrand dreams he is a four-footed animal that kills small game and children and runs from heavily-armed pursuers. He wakes with a strange hunger. Aymar gives him a constant diet of raw meat and that pacifies him. When Bertrand goes to Paris to take the medical school exam, his friends drag him to a brothel where he commits his first major atrocity. A



subscriber to the Oedipus theory. He seduces and kills his half-willing mother in a grisly scene of animal depravity. To escape prosecution, he flees the countryside for Paris in midst of war, where his activities are less conspicuous.

In another passage written under the spell of Freud, Bertrand and Sophia, a beautiful young masochist, fall in love. They have lurid romantic scenes where Bertrand wounds various parts of her scarred anatomy with a knife, which satisfies his insane cravings for a while. Like Hugues Wulfric in Menzies early tale, the werewolf can be redeemed by the love of an understanding woman. Though she also enjoys their sanguine encounters, Sophia abandons Bertrand and he returns to his nocturnal outings. His atrocities seem minor, however, compared to the horrors of the Paris Commune and

man's savage survival instincts in war. Eventually, he is brought to trial and sentenced to life, not in prison, but in a humane mental institution where he is protected from himself. He spends the rest of his days cut off from the rest of the world. Aymar visits him but on those days is carefully drugged so that he cannot speak. Without the love of a woman, a werewolf is ultimately alone, and the wolf inside renders him silent.

As a final and more modern note, Geoffrey Household's "Taboo" (1940) is a gritty tale with so many werewolf elements that its ambiguity and lack of supernatural phenomena are unimportant. In yet another story within the story, a wolf is shot with a silver bullet that turns up in one of the villager's stomach. The werewolf in "Taboo" is a demented man who savagely kills and then hides his victims. The hero feels his "feral breath" and his "heavy weight" upon him. The werewolf is a living, breathing tangible creature, and the issue of the actual man-to-wolf transformation is irrelevant. The werewolf is real.

He is the dark heart of civilization. Alone, unable to breathe freely in human society, his desires are unsatisfied, and he either revolts in orgiastic blood-letting or perishes without having lived. His emotional indigestion erupts violently. His literary image is so diffuse that it can be argued to include Lovecraft's "The Outsider" or half the works of Jack "Wolf" London in the werewolf canon. He is an enemy of man because he is an outsider with the call of the wild as his secret sin.

His animal bloodlust is well documented and understood, but his love life is another matter. From "Hugues the Werewolf" to *The Werewolf of Paris*, an intimate relationship with a sympathetic lover can reconnect him to the human race, stop his nocturnal prowling, and sate his feral appetite. Erckmann and Chatrian do not record whether Hugues-le-Loup finally got his werewolf bride in line, nor is it known what would have happened if Christian had not interfered between his brother and

White Fell. Marryat's Christina is another matter, married but fully unrepentant. The strangest case is Gilles de Retz with his female animal companion, Astarte, who serves him faithfully, but the damned seldom can save the damned.

After 1940, the werewolf went beyond literature to join the vampire as an icon of damnation in the popular culture. By the onset of World War II, this creature

touched a wound that soon turned all too real. It is no small irony that Hitler dubbed his plan for the continuation of hostilities after the war Operation Werewolf. Up from the primal mass of man's lower instincts, the werewolf lives on.

1

Other Early Werewolf Works

listed chronologically

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 O'Donnell, Eliot. *Werewolves* (1912, reprint Wholesale Book Co. 1972)
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 Otten, Charlotte. *The Lycanthropy Reader* (Dorset Press, 1986)

NOVELS:

- Biss, Gerald. *The Door of the Unreal* (Eveleigh Nash [UK], 1919)
 Williams, Harper. *The Thing In The Woods* (McBride, 1924)
 Service, Robert W. *The House of Fear* (1927)
 Cline, Leonard. *The Dark Chamber* (Viking Press, 1927)
 Swem, Charles Lee. *Werewolf* (Doubleday, 1928)
 Kallas, Madame Aino. *The Wolf's Bride* (Cape 1930, translation from Finnish publication, 1928)
 Carr, John Dickson. *It Walks By Night* (Harper, 1930)
 Barnes, James Strachey. *Half a Life* (1933)
 Layland-Barratt, Frances. *Lycanthia* (Jenkins [UK], 1935)
 Mann, Jack. *Grey Shapes* (Wright & Brown [UK] 1937; Bookfinger 1970)
 Philpotts, Eden. *Lycanthrope: The Mystery of William Wolf* (1938)
 Gregory, Franklin. *The White Wolf* (Random House, 1941)

STORIES

- Crowe, Catherine. "A Story of a Weir-Wolf" (1846)
 Greenough, Mrs. Richard S. "Monare" (*Arabesques*, Roberts Bros, 1872)
 Greene, Mrs. "Bound by a Spell" (1885)
 Maupassant, Guy de. "The White Wolf" (??)
 Campbell, Sir Gilbert Edward. "The White Wolf Of Kostopchin" in *Wild And Weird Tales Of Imagination And Mystery* (Ward, Lock [UK], 1889; *The Book of the Werewolf*, 1973)
 Bierce, Ambrose. "The Eyes of the Panther" (1891)
 Field, Eugene. "The Werewolf" (*The Second Book of Tales*, Scrib 1896)
 Beaugrand, H. "The Werewolves" (1898)
 Philpotts, Eden. "Loup-Garou!" (*Loup-Garou*, Sands and Co [UK], 1899)
 Pain, Barry. "The Undying Thing" (*Stories in the Dark*, 1901)
 Saki. "The She-Wolf" in (*Beasts And Super-Beasts*, 1912)
 Capes, Bernard. "The Thing in the Forest" (*The Fabulists*, Mills and Boon [UK], 1915)
 Blackwood, Algernon. "Running Wolf" (*The Wolves of God and Other Fey Stories*, 1921)
 Wintle, W. James. "The Voice in the Night" (*Ghost Gleams*, Heath, Cranton [UK], 1921)
 Brand, Max. "The Werewolf" (1926)
 Salmon, Arthur. "The Were-wolf" (*The Ferry of Souls*, 1927)
 Carleton, S. [pseudonym of Susan Carleton Jones] "The Lame Priest" (*Beware After Dark!* 1929)
 Spence, Lewis. "Enchantment on the Unicorn" (*The Archer in the Arras*, Grant and Murray [Scotland] 1932)
 Walpole, Hugh. "Tarnhelm" (*All Souls Night*, 1933)



Every child knows the legend of the werewolf: The person bitten by a wolf (or werewolf) turns, every full moon, into a hideous man-wolf that lopes about on two (sometimes four) feet and feeds on unfortunates who cross its path. Wolfbane is the only repellant against the werewolf, and a silver bullet in the heart the only way to lay it to rest. Some children can even recite the famous quatrain in which the werewolf has been immortalized:

"Even a man who is pure of heart/And says his prayers by night,/Can become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms/And the moon is full and bright."

Make that children since 1941. Truth be told, the werewolf as we know it today is largely an invention of George Waggoner's 1941 Universal film *THE WOLF MAN* and its countless knock offs. Certainly, famous works of werewolf fiction predate the film's release, among them G. W. M. Reynolds' *Wagner, the Wehrwolf* and Clemence Houseman's "The Were-Wolf." But in contrast to the vampire (whose origins and predatory nocturnal habits the cinematic werewolf mimics suspiciously—proof, no doubt, that Hollywood was just as fond of formula films half a century ago as it is today) and even the ghost, there is no true *Ur-text(s)* that codified werewolf lore before the werewolf became a literary phenomena.

The proof is in the pulps, where werewolf fiction was popular almost two decades before werewolf films, and yielded a fecundity of approaches and treatments seen with few other horror motifs. Many pulp writers returned to the werewolf theme on more than one occasion, and a few are known primarily by their efforts in this vein.

At the top of this list is the durable Grege La Spina, who wrote eighteen stories for *Weird Tales* between 1924 and 1951. Two of these are werewolf tales, and one is among the most popular stories to appear in the magazine during its early years. *Invaders from the Dark* (4-6/25) was something of an anomaly when it first appeared: a novel-length (50,000-word) werewolf tale. At least that's

how it was billed. In fact, La Spina's novel is an occult romance (as were most of her longer works) with a werewolf element.

Readers knew this right away from the frame narrative in which La Spina recounts how she is summoned to a house by someone seeking "a serious student of the occult." A metal box containing a manuscript is thrown to her from a window of the house where she has her appointment seconds before the house blows up. The subway car she rides back from this experience crashes into another. She transfers to a taxi which crashes with a blowout, leaving her with a broken arm. Efforts to get the manuscript published are equally disastrous: It is saved from a lit match dropped on it, a typist nearly throws crucial pages of it away, a duplicate is destroyed by a fire in the publisher's printing room, and the plant that prints the book is dynamited. (La Spina actually has the temerity to write "I know that there are plenty who will sneer at the recital of these *accidents*, calling them coincidences.")

You may be wondering what all this has to do with werewolves. The answer is: Plenty, if you accept that werewolves are just one of many manifestations of the black arts behind these events. The story in the manuscript proves to be a somewhat sluggish tale of a Russian noble, Princess Tchernova, who moves her retinue into a New York neighborhood and begins wooing the boyfriend of the local occult scholar (every neighborhood should have one). Strange things begin happening in no time: a white "dog" is seen prowling the Princess's grounds at night, a policeman is set upon by a dog pack, people begin disappearing at the same time the Princess begins ordering less raw meat from the butcher, etc. Nearly all of this happens offstage, as does the climactic finale in which the boyfriend is transformed into a wolf during a strange ceremony that involves ringing him with garlands of noxious-smelling orchids and making him drink specially prepared water, and his transformation back into a man thanks to an equally inscrutable ceremony performed by the occultist. The hand-wringing human

melodrama of innocence imperiled and salvaged (in this case, a naive young man saved by his savvy girlfriend—quite a radical reversal of roles in those days) that dominates the foreground of this immensely popular story is probably a good index to what readers expected from weird fiction in 1925.

Indeed, the Princess Tchernova is the classic femme fatale with a few features suggestive of more than earthly lusts thrown in:

...there were the beryl green eyes that in the dusk gleamed like garnets; the sharp white teeth; the small, low-set ears, pointed above...the over-red lips; the narrowed eyebrows that narrowed down to meet at the foot of the nose. There were the oval, tinted, highly-polished nails on the slender fingers, with the third finger so abnormally long. Even the princess' slinking, sinuous walk ...by its resemblance to the tireless gait of the wolf, would have betrayed her real personality to an expert.

This is about the closest La Spina's tale comes to dispensing conventional werewolf lore, which may indicate there was little such lore at the time to dispense. It's hard to know, for example, whether the following forgotten fact on the care and feeding of werewolves comes from folk tale, or whether La Spina was making it up as she went along: "The werewolf . . . cannot eat sugar, but turns from it with loathing. Nor can it drink any sweet cordials." La Spina's "The Devil's Pool" (6/32) is full of similar anomalies. In this story, characters become werewolves on a nightly basis after being completely immersed in a pool of tainted crystalline water (the hero is saved because his head never goes below the surface) and eating human flesh. Another bit of arcane werewolf lore, that the werewolf in human form sees its reflection as a wolf in the mirror, was the subject of beautiful cover by J. Allen St. John for that issue.

Seabury Quinn was the most prolific writer for the weird fiction pulps, and so the simple law of averages dictated that he would turn out at least one werewolf story. In fact, seven of Quinn's contributions to *Weird Tales* were werewolf novelettes, tying him with H. Warner Munn as the writer of the greatest number of pulp werewolf yarns.

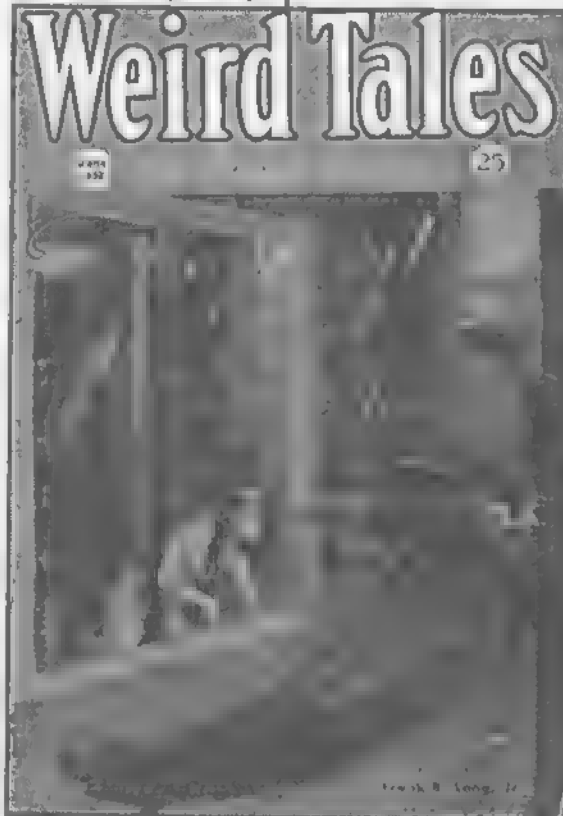
Quinn's first werewolf story, "The Phantom Farmhouse" (10/23), was very popular with readers, and frequently evoked by editor Farnsworth Wright in the *Weird Tales* letter column as justification for the publishing of subsequent

werewolf stories, among them La Spina's *Invaders from the Dark* (which Quinn himself praised). Like La Spina's tales, "The Phantom Farmhouse" promulgates werewolf lore somewhat different from that which most of us know. In this story, three evil people who waylay and murder travelers are themselves murdered by irate neighbors and buried in unconsecrated ground. They return as werewolves (who, in contrast to La Spina's, have an abnormally long forefinger, rather than third finger), and are ultimately laid to rest when the hero reads the service for the dead over their graves. Quinn returned to this idea again in "Uncanonized" (11/39), set in medieval Germany, which tells of a woman who leaps to her death on her wedding night rather than yield to the *droit du seigneur* (the custom in which the lord of the land is allowed to sleep with the bride on her wedding night) and who returns from her unconsecrated suicide's grave to avenge herself as a werewolf. (Apropos the similarities between the Hollywood werewolf and the vampire, it is worth pointing out that in many folk tales, suicides return as vampires.)

Although the cause and cure of lycanthropy varied in Quinn's stories, sympathies toward werewolves did not: invariably, male werewolves were portrayed as evil beings who deserve to be killed, while female werewolves were portrayed as victims of circumstance deserving help. In "The Gentle Werewolf" (7/40), a woman who angers a sorceress is transformed into a wolf and cursed to remain in that form until "some noble lord shall kiss thy hairy

beast's-lips and declare his love for thee." Her salvation comes about after she pounces on assassins trying to kill her lover, who ironically has been exiled to the wilderness after being blamed for her "disappearance." In "Bon Voyage, Michele" (1/44), the Russian woman named in the title saves not only her lover, but the entire allied Army of Occupation in Coblenz, Germany, by leading them to a house of German werewolf who have been stockpiling weapons to mount a resistance. Quinn plays very fast and loose with traditional werewolf lore in this story, having his heroine become a shape-shifter after she dons a wolfskin wrap lent her by one of the family, and a full-fledged werewolf only after she has been bitten by one of them. What's more, she finds she can control her transformation at will, regardless of whether there is a full moon:

...I scratched off a warning,



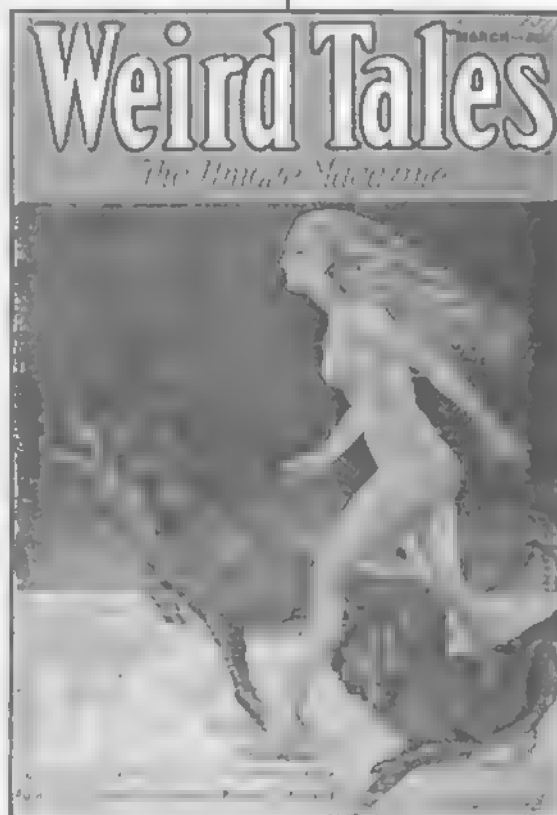
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then lay back on my bed and let the wolf-force flow through me—just made my mind a blank and kept repeating to myself, "You are a wolf, not a woman—Michele

Mikhailovitch, you are no woman, but a wolf. Take you natural shape, Michele Mikhailovitch."

Then I began to feel the prickling itching of my skin which always came before the actual change, and in a moment I had snatched up the note and gone out the window.

Quinn's psychic detective, Jules de Grandin, battled a number of nemeses more than once in the course of his ninety-three adventures, among them the werewolf. Quinn based "The Wolf of St. Bonnot" (12/30) on a legend he had recounted in the April-May-June 1924 issues of *Weird Tales* as part of his non-fiction "Weird Crimes" series. In this story, a seance accidentally summons the spirit of Gilles Garnier, a sixteenth-century lycanthrope who was burned at the stake, but whose evil spirit remains earthbound. Attracted to "unholy thoughts" in the collective subconscious of the seance participants, Garnier acquires material substance from their "psychoplasm" and manipulates the weakest of the bunch, a pregnant woman, to help him in his nightly prowls. In "The Blood Flower" (3/27), Quinn followed La Spina's lead in *Invaders from the Dark*, having his heroine become a werewolf while wearing flowers during the full moon that were grown in the soil of a town on the Rumanian side of the Transylvanian Alps. "The Thing in the Fog" (3/33) anticipates "Bon Voyage, Michele" with its heroine becoming a werewolf while wearing a wolf-fur cloak during an occult ritual. (The reader is also informed that a person can become a werewolf by drinking from certain tainted springs, and even by sleeping on unhallowed ground in certain geographic locales.) More interesting than Quinn's variations on the origins of the werewolf in these stories is his flagrant disregard for traditional means of disposing of it: in "The Wolf of St. Bonnot," Garnier's spirit is exorcised and his psychoplasmic shape skewered with a dagger; in "The Blood Flower," the werewolf spirit is driven out of the heroine by sprinkling her with a mixture of eight common medicinal agents from an ash hyssop ("It is notorious that the wood of the ash tree is as intolerable to the werewolf as the bloom of garlic is unpleasant to the vampire") and a dead werewolf is kept dead by driving an ash stake through his heart (another nod to the vampire legend); and in "The Thing in the Fog," the werewolf is dispatched with a single gun-



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shot to the head—no silver bullet—bearing out de Grandin's contention that "weapons efficacious against an ordinary physical foe are potent against him, while charms and exorcisms which would put a true demon to flight are powerless." Or, as he put it more bluntly in "The Blood Flower," in response to the question of why it isn't necessary to depend on the legendary silver bullet:

"What did those old legend-mongers know of the power of modern firearms. *Parbleu*, had the good St. George possessed a military rifle of today, he might have slain the dragon without approaching nearer than a mile! When I did shoot that wolfman, my friend, I had something more powerful than superstition in my hand. *Morbleu*, but I did shoot a hole in him large enough for him to have walked through."

Farnsworth Wright mentioned both *Invaders from the Dark* and "The Phantom Farmhouse" when

promoting H. Warner Munn's "The Werewolf of Ponkert" (7/25), and to some extent he was on target. Like stories by Quinn and La Spina, Munn's tale took liberties with conventional werewolf lore, and differed from other pulp werewolf yarns largely in Munn's superior command of prose. However, "The Werewolf of Ponkert" was a unique werewolf tale in at least one regard: it was the first told from the point of view of the werewolf (an idea Munn had gotten from H. P. Lovecraft, who threw it out in an early *Weird Tales* letter column).

"The Werewolf of Ponkert" is delivered as the death-row narrative of Wladislaw Brenryk, a jeweler living in sixteenth-century Hungary who is set upon on his way home from work one night by a ravenous pack of wolves. Brenryk discovers these are no ordinary wolves when he kills one, and is told by the pack leader, an entity known to the others as "the Master," that he must either join the wolf pack or die. From this point on, the story becomes a chronicle of werewolf life as Brenryk runs nightly with the pack, describing the agony of transformation, the ecstasy of the hunt, the pangs of conscience he feels whenever the pack runs down a human being, and his horror when he is disciplined by the master for rebellious thoughts and made to kill his wife and child (or at least, so he thinks) while in wolf form. Ultimately, Brenryk helps human beings track down and destroy the rest of the wolf-pack (although the Master escapes), even though he knows he will himself be flayed alive and his story written upon his skin to be passed down generation to

generation.

Acclaim for Munn's story was great enough that he responded with a sequel, "The Master Returns" (7/27), to develop an idea only implied in the first story: that the Master is a shape-shifter capable of taking a variety of forms. Here he appears in a variety of forms, including a withered old man and a giant bat, but not a wolf, and proves impervious to the usual exorcisms by which creatures of supernatural horror are dispatched, leaving the hero to conclude "The Power that fought against me was so anciently evil, so horribly unnatural, that only other magic as ancient as itself could prevail against it. Either that, or the God or Gods that rule us are indifferent to human fates."

Munn elaborated this idea further in the next installment in the saga, the short novel "The Werewolf's Daughter" (10-12/28), wherein the Master's full identity is finally revealed: He is a being from the solar system of Nythris, the dark double star of Algol, summoned to Earth millenia before by a power-hungry Babylonian witch and imprisoned in the body of the witch's servant, whose soul he has displaced. This was variant enough on the werewolf theme to distinguish the story as an original, but Munn was not content to simply explain the supernatural in terms of the extraterrestrial. He portrays the Master as so enraged by his inescapable predicament that he determines to sow misery and discord among human beings for the duration of his immortal existence.

It's hard to tell if Munn had in mind from the start the trajectory that his werewolf series wound up taking, but in any event "The Werewolf's Daughter" deviates markedly from the path taken by the first two stories in the series. Although Munn had shown more of an interest in the human drama of his stories, the supernatural elements his werewolf saga recede almost completely into the background. "The Werewolf's Daughter" is the tale of Ivga Brenryk, daughter of Wladislaw, whom it turns out was saved at the end of "The Werewolf of Ponkert." Stigmatized by her father's shame, she is treated as an outcast by superstitious villagers and blamed for every mishap that befalls them. When a villager is found dead from a wolf-mauling (presumably the work of the Master), she is forced to flee a lynch mob in the company of a passing gypsy (also portrayed as an outcast) and escapes their wrath only by entering into a bargain with the Master that at least one person in each successive generation of her family will serve him.

Over his next three "werewolf" stories (which comprised seven vignettes) for the pulps—"The Master Strikes" (11/30), "The Master Fights" (12/30), and "The Master Has a Narrow Escape" (1/31), known collectively as the "Tales of the Werewolf Clan"—Munn used the Brenryk lineage as a lens for focusing major events of European and American history, giving Ivga Brenryk's descendants roles in the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of the Huguenots, and the Salem Witch Trials. Only one tale features a werewolf, but the Master is present in all, adopting a variety of guises with which to goad characters into acknowledging the family curse. Invariably, the Brenryks are victims, not perpetrators, of the misery caused by catastrophic historical events, and the Master delights in promising them deliverance if they will serve him, only to show that events would have turned out as they do even had they not acquiesced to his temptations.

Essentially a depiction of history as the tragic sum of human ignorance, intolerance and superstition, Munn's werewolf saga is a rare example of the profundity some writers achieved in pulp weird fiction. In the late 1970s, Munn extended the saga into contemporary times through five stories written for Bob Weinberg's *Lost Fantasies* series, bringing the Brenryks and the Master through the American Revolutionary and Civil Wars and World War II, before the Master is returned to Nithrys. As a whole, the series shows that Munn grasped very early in his career the understanding that the werewolf, like other supernatural beings, was most interesting when used as a mirror for reflecting on the human condition.

It's conceivable that Jack Williamson, who began writing for *Weird Tales* in 1932, was familiar with Munn's werewolf saga when he wrote "Wolves of Darkness" for the January, 1932 issue of *Strange Tales*. Although frequently categorized as a werewolf tale, this oft-reprinted novelette is a weird scientific tale about an experiment in extradimensional exploration that goes awry, admitting beings from a "black dimension" into our own who commandeer the bodies of organic life forms at a remote west Texas ranch—primarily wolves but also human beings, both dead and living—to coerce a hostage scientist into repairing the machine that will let more of their kind into our dimension. Although Williamson's tale has aims entirely different from Munn's stories, it doesn't take much imagination to see that his personality-dispossessing aliens are the science fiction equivalent of Munn's supernaturally-conjured



Master.

But it would be wrong to give the impression that Williamson is in any way a derivative writer. The proof is in his novel *Darker Than You Think*, not only the most original werewolf novel to appear in the weird fiction pulps, but arguably the single most ingenious werewolf tale ever written. *Darker Than You Think* appeared in the December, 1940 issue of *Unknown* (later titled *Unknown Worlds*), a fantasy magazine whose editor, John W. Campbell, deliberately tried to distance its contents from what was being published in *Weird Tales*. Probably the most important distinction between the two magazines' editorial policies is that Campbell, who also edited the trend-setting magazine of science fiction's Golden Age, *Astounding Science Fiction*, asked *Unknown* writers to develop the premises of their fantasies along the same logical lines as science fiction, i.e., introduce a fantastic possibility and then show the impact it would have logically on the lives and personalities of those whom it affected.

Williamson let the disciplines of anthropology and psychology shape his tale's logical guidelines. *Darker Than You Think* recounts the fate of the University Foundation Expedition to Asia upon its return to the United States. Its members have brought back with them a sealed box whose contents will purportedly have an earthshaking impact on the way we think of the origins of human life. But before expedition members can divulge information about their discovery, they are killed off one by one in apparently freak encounters with wild animals: one is killed by wolves, another by a saber-tooth tiger, and another by a huge snake. The novel's point-of-view character is Will Barbee, a semi-alcoholic newspaper reporter who was forced by circumstances to give up the training that would have made him eligible to go on the expedition. Throughout the novel, Barbee grapples with "dreams" in which he teams up with April Bell, a *femme fatale* he meets while waiting to greet the returning expedition, and hunts down expedition members in a variety of animal guises.

Eventually, it is revealed that the box contains the remains of *Homo lycaanthropus*, a species of shape-shifting human that eventually lost the evolutionary high-ground to *Homo sapiens*, but have skillfully crossbred themselves with mankind over the centuries to the point where they are on the verge of returning to power. Purer-bred lycanthropes have always walked among men, and the less cau-



tious have been persecuted as witches and warlocks. Others have held power positions in which they secretly manipulated the course of history to benefit the species. One of them is Barbee's psychiatrist, who dismisses Barbee's dreams as everything from projections of his jealous feelings towards the expedition members to displaced sexual anxieties. The ingenuity of Williamson's handling of Barbee's psychoanalysis sessions (informed to some extent by insights Williamson gained during his own psychoanalysis at the Meninger Clinic) is that the psychiatrist's interpretation of Will's dreams is psychologically sound, at least from a Freudian perspective: they do stem from subconscious impulses and urges that demand to be satisfied. Only later does Barbee realize what his psychiatrist has been hiding from him, and what possibly all psychi-

atrists since Freud have been hiding from their patients: that their primitive subconscious impulses are the result of *Homo lycaanthropus* blood flowing through their veins.

Not every writer who wrote more than one werewolf tale for the pulps reached the heights scaled by Williamson and Munn, or achieved the same notoriety through them enjoyed by La Spina and Quinn. However, they put the creature to interesting uses and further expanded the fictional werewolf's legacy.

Robert Bloch published four werewolf tales, the first of which, "The Hound of Pedro" (WT, 11/38), involved a pact with the devil whereby a man exchanges personalities with a menacing black dog to hunt for souls. Under his Tarleton Fiske pseudonym, Bloch mixed fantasy and science fiction in "Flowers from the Moon" (*Strange Stories*, 8/39), in which a species of orchid that flourishes on the moon is found to induce lycanthropy when brought back to earth. In "The Man Who Cried 'Wolf'" (WT, 5/45), an adulterous husband conspires with his lover to drive his superstitious wife insane with fear that a werewolf is loose, unaware that his beloved actually is a werewolf. Bloch's most clever story in this vein is "The Boy Man Will Get You" (WT, 3/46), whose heroine fatally misreads the nocturnal habits of her werewolf neighbor as those of a vampire.

In two of his three pulp werewolf yarns—"In the Forest of Vilfere" (WT, 8/25) and "Wolfshead" (WT, 4/26)—Robert E. Howard introduced a new bit of werewolf arcana: "[I]f a werewolf is slain in the half-form of a man, its ghost will haunt its slayer through eternity. But

if it is slain as a wolf, hell gapes to receive it. The true werewolf is not (as many think) a man who may take the form of a wolf, but a wolf who takes the form of a man." Such is the plight of the luckless hero of "Wolfshead," who spends much of the story trying to shake the spirit of a werewolf he slayed in human form, and who usurps his body nightly to scavenge for food. Howard left the door open to other means of having lycanthropy thrust upon one in his shudder tale "The Black Hound of Death" (WT, 11/36), which tells of man whose face is so cruelly disfigured by torturers into that of a wolf that it imparts a preternatural lupine viciousness to his personality.

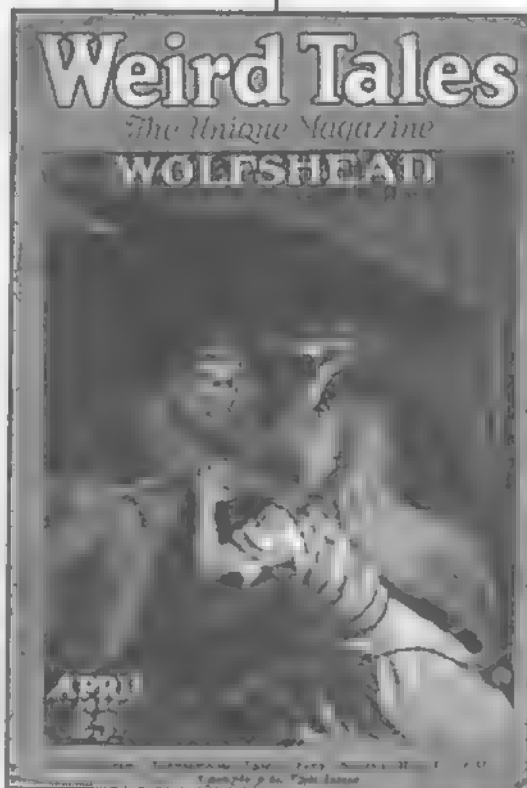
Two of Manly Banister's three werewolf stories, "Satan's Bondage" (WT, 9/42) and "Devil Dog" (WT, 7/45), introduced new bits of werewolf lore: the lycanthropically-inclined must bathe in a special stream of water in order to transform, and bathe again in that stream before sunrise or else remain in wolf form until the following evening. Banister introduced a new approach to more traditional werewolf fare in "Eena" (WT, 9/47), inverting the usual chain of events to tell of a wolf bitch who periodically transforms into a woman to visit the man who raised her.

The different points of view writers could take on a theme redolent with as many possibilities as the werewolf is evident from Manly Wade Wellman's two contributions along these lines to *Weird Tales*. In the amusing "The Werewolf Snarls" (3/37), a man who uses a witch's ointment in an experiment to become a werewolf becomes a reluctant conversation piece at a party. In contrast, Wellman had Judge Keith Hilary Pursuivant, the first of his several serial spookbusters, match wits with a werewolf in his first adventure, "The Hairy Ones Shall Dance" (1-3/38; published under the pseudonym Gans T. Field) who effects his physical transformation from man into wolf with the help of ectoplasm exuded at a

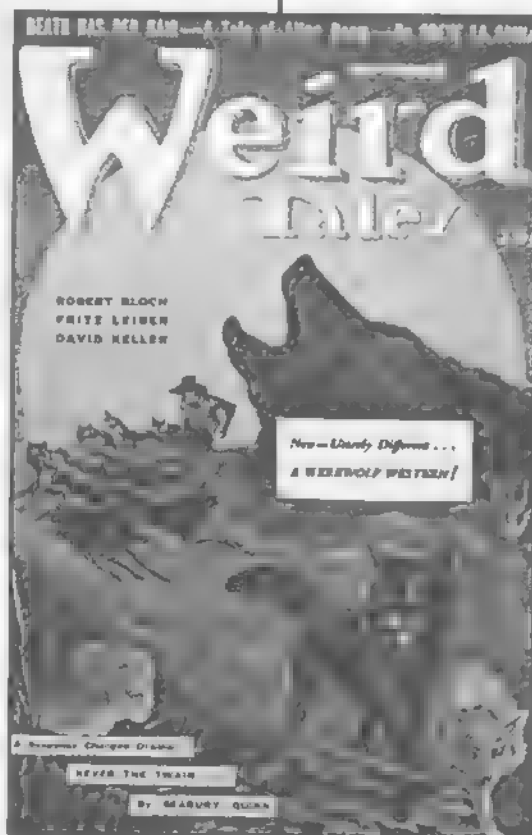
seance.

The stories mentioned above represent about half of all pulp werewolf fiction. The remainder is comprised of solo efforts that do little to help codify the loose ends of werewolf mythology. A list of the best writers of these stories reads like a Who's Who of early-twentieth century fantasy and horror, and as might be expected from such August company, each writer had his or her own ideas about how to make a werewolf interesting.

Traditional approaches to the werewolf include August Derleth and Mark Schorer's "The Woman at Loon Point" (WT, 12/36), in which a sickly man turned into a werewolf by the bite of another regains his humanity when the wolf who converts him is slain. The werewolf of Howard Wandrei's "The Hand of the O'Mecca" (WT, 4/35) is as traditional as they come, but Wandrei's treatment of the idea was not: his protagonist wrenches off the paw of the werewolf who attacks him and takes it to show the woman whose "hand" in marriage he has asked for, unaware that she is the beast. (The story ends with one of the worst puns in all weird fiction.) Clark Ashton Smith's werewolf in "The Beast of Averlone" (WT, 5/33) displays all the habits of the traditional werewolf, including transformations by full moon, a taste for human flesh, and vulnerability to a silver bullet, but its origins do not: it proves to be an otherwise devout monk, whose venial self is amplified under the influence of a passing comet. Indeed, how a werewolf gets to be one appears to have been a favorite variant on the otherwise traditional tale of lycanthropy. Henry Kuttner, in "The Seal of Sin" (*Strange Stories*, 8/40), makes his werewolves the lackeys of a power-hungry occultist who uses a ring bearing the Seal of Solomon to transform them into howling hitmen. With similar disregard for this aspect of the werewolf legend, Arlton Eadie, in "The Wolf Girl of Josselyn" (WT, 8/38), depicts lycanthropy as a stigma passed down through the genera-



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tions from a group of women cursed by a gypsy to turn feral and eat their male young.

The truly interesting werewolf story variants were those that strove to render their lycanthropes as credible characters in an age of scientific reason. In "The Hound" (WT, 11/42), for example, Fritz Leiber imagined the werewolf to be as adaptable to the contemporary urban American landscape as the ghost proved in his 1941 tale "Smoke Ghost." If one thinks of the werewolf as a supernatural creature that, like any other, embodies the fears of those who believe in it, then it stands to reason the contemporary werewolves would differ somewhat from their primitive forebears:

"Yes, I'd like to think that there'd be werewolves among our demons, but they wouldn't be much like the old ones. No nice clean fur, white teeth and shining eyes. Oh no, instead you'd get some nasty hound that wouldn't surprise you if you saw it nosing at a garbage pail or crawling out from under a truck. Frighten and terrorize you yes. But surprise, no. It would fit into the environment. Look as if it belonged in a city, and smell the same. Because of the twisted emotions that would be its food, your emotions and mine. A matter of diet."

James Blish one-upped Leiber in "There Shall Be No Darkness" (*Thrilling Wonder Stories*, 4/50), theorizing that werewolves were not only possible in the modern age, but explicable as a medical consequence of an overactive pineal gland. The following explanation of lycanthropic transformation is just one example of how Blish showed that everything we know about the traditional werewolf can be explained in terms of excess circulating pineal hormone levels:

"You know how water takes the shape of the vessel it sits in? Well, protoplasm is a liquid. The pineal hormone lowers the surface tension of the cells and at the same time short circuits the sympathetic nervous system directly to the cerebral cortex.

Result, a plastic, malleable body, within limits. A wolf is easiest because the skeletons are similar—not much pinearin can do with bone, you see.

The one other way writers found to modernize werewolves besides explaining



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them in terms of modern science or psychology was to make them the butts of jokes lampooning their incongruity in a sophisticated society. The werewolf protagonist of Anthony Boucher's "The Compleat Werewolf" (*Unknown Worlds*, 4/42) is a bit of a buffoon until he discovers that his imperviousness to any weapon but silver bullets makes him uniquely suited to carry out espionage work for the United States. Jane Rice, on the other hand, shows a traditional European werewolf in "The Refugee" (*Unknown Worlds*, 10/43) to be no match for a crafty American living in a war-torn Europe where each represents to the other the last meal of non-rationed meat; a literal tale of the biter bit.

So what do all these pulp werewolf tales add up to? If you worked in Hollywood in 1941, no doubt you would say an incoherent jumble of folklore and auctorial

liberty-taking that needs to be shaped into a coherent mythology. But for readers and writers, it amounted to a rich and malleable theme that stimulated some of the best talents in the field, and accommodated imaginations in a way that other themes—the ghost, the witch, even the omnipresent vampire—did not. But of course, such differences of opinion are to be expected. After all, when was the last time you saw a film that even vaguely resembled the text it was adapted from?



Next issue: Science fiction writers and editors tried valiantly, but they couldn't keep the bogeys out of their magazines. Part II of the horror-stories-in-science-fiction-magazines extravaganza (which logically would have appeared in TSF #13—the SF/horror special—but was just too massive for that already crowded issue) will show how the scientific method couldn't get rid of the bad things under the bed between 1937 and 1960.

Q

LYCANTHROPIC

An Overview of the Best

John

The werewolf occupies a place of no small importance in the history of the modern horror novel, yet as a mythical archetype is not nearly so popular as the vampire with authors and readers. It offers the opportunity to reflect on humankind's place in the evolutionary order, what has been lost in that procession, and whether it is desirable to regain it. Unlike the vampire, the werewolf is usually depicted as a creature of uncontrollable urges rather than evil inclinations. Those who are introduced to the state of Lycanthropy remain victims of a sort, since they do not give themselves over willingly, and suffer from bouts of remorse and depression when presented with evidence or memories of the nocturnal deeds after the fact.

In compiling my list of the best modern werewolf novels, regrettably there were a few candidates that I was not able to obtain (such as Crosland Brown's *Tombly's Walk*). Perhaps there are one or two gems out there awaiting my discovery still. I encourage you to write the editors and make your case for any that were omitted.

As regards the ordering of my list, I suggest you pay heed to the relative position of a book rather than its absolute ranking, if such things matter at all. My inclinations about such ratings is subject to considerable whimsy, and not to be taken too seriously.

1. SAINT PETER'S WOLF

by Michael Cadnum

(Carroll & Graf, 1991;
Zebra, 1993)

Choosing my favorite novel for this list was, thankfully, not difficult. This book is beautifully written, well plotted, and thoughtful in a way too rarely seen in genre fiction.

Benjamin Byrd, a psychologist and collector of rarities, crosses paths with Johanna Fisher when his car injures her dog. Through her he meets a renowned collector who loans him a tantalizing artifact—a set of wolf fangs set in a silver base. Though beset by a number of personal crises, Byrd begins to have exhilarating dreams of roaming the night as an animal. Slowly, evidence accumulates that these are not merely dreams. Johanna offers the possibility of great intimacy, but Benjamin is fearful of what he is becoming, and she seems to have some terrible secret

of her own. Both of them become enmeshed in the investigation into a series of brutal attacks. Even as their relationship grows, the authorities seem determined to threaten their happiness.

Michael Cadnum is an accomplished poet. His prose is superb, communicating simply, yet with great artistry. Though it builds to a series of gripping climaxes, this book impresses on many levels, and there are a wealth of finely wrought details. I found myself stopping to admire the beauty of many passages. This is someone I had intended to check out previously without ever doing so; after finishing *Saint Peter's Wolf*, I want to read everything I can by this engaging writer.

Eschewing traditional myths, Cadnum develops his own historical antecedents and a unique perspective on Lycanthropy. In many other werewolf tales, the actions of the beast are violent and even abhorrent. Here, when Benjamin Byrd begins his night roamings as a wolf, he does commit atrocious acts. But he learns that this is the result of his human side, still dominant and arrogant with new-found power. As his animal nature asserts itself more fully, Benjamin sees no purpose in killing wantonly and yearns to become just another participant in the natural world. This exploration of self takes the book to lofty and fantastic places, occasionally to excess. There is an aquatic adventure that threatens to overpower the book with its inadvertent silliness. But it returns to end on an ambiguous note, thus mirroring Benjamin's emotional journey from personal struggles, to pain and fear, to exaltation, and at last to an understanding that even this amazing new life as a werewolf is unpredictable, even dangerous.

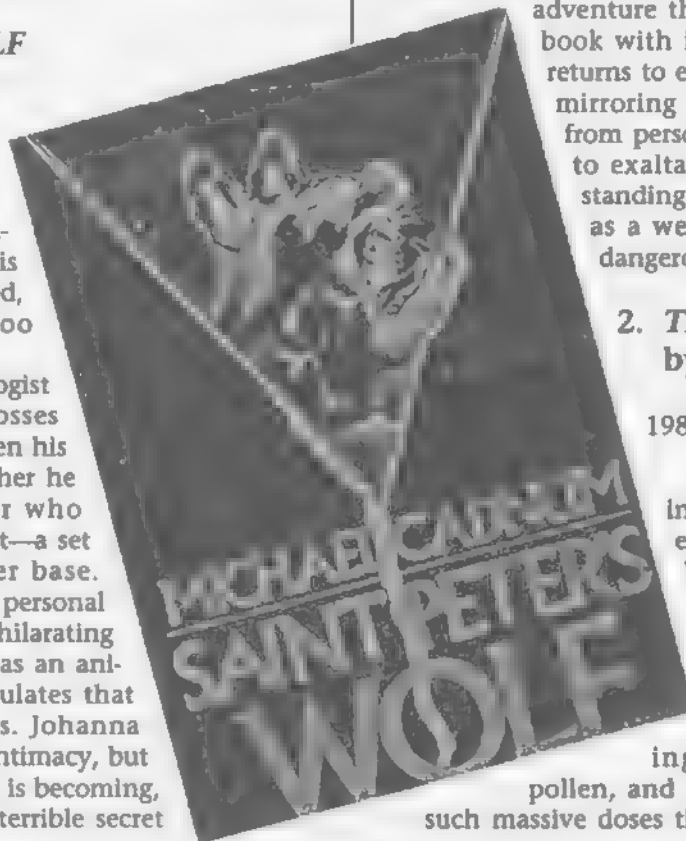
2. THE NIGHTWALKER

by Thomas Tessier

(Atheneum, 1979; Berkley, 1981)

Bobby Ives is an American living in London, trying to put his experiences as a soldier in Vietnam behind him and living off disability checks. He experiences episodes of aching joints, migraine headaches and violent outbursts with increasing frequency. To treat these he

ingests vitamins, ginseng, bee pollen, and other health food remedies in such massive doses that they may be compounding



LITERATURE

Modern Werewolf Novels

Brower

his ailments.

He confides his troubles to Annie, a sincere woman who tries her best to understand and encourage him. But eventually she is present during one of his psychotic periods, bringing about the end of their relationship.

Ives seeks help from a young clairvoyant, who identifies him as marked for tragedy and violence but refuses to elaborate further.

After more violent acts are committed, Bobby returns to the seer. Guilty about her foreknowledge, she admits Bobby has the mark of the werewolf upon him and agrees to try reversing the transformations. Ives is kept locked in isolation and fed a strictly controlled diet. It is all to no avail, and he escapes to try and live out his existence as the creature he has become.

By combining the psychological horror that became popular in the 1950s with the more traditional mythology of the werewolf, Thomas Tessier fashions one of the classic novels in this sub-genre. Bobby Ives' character is developed for much of the book in alienated terms that appear to be leading to his exposure as a deranged killer. So it is a profound shock to learn that he is in fact becoming a wolfman, a creature we regard with almost nostalgic familiarity. The werewolf and zombie traditions are interestingly blended here, and the whole package is made believably current. The descriptions by Tessier of his combat-shocked protagonist and several desperate teenagers introduced later in the story ring depressingly true.

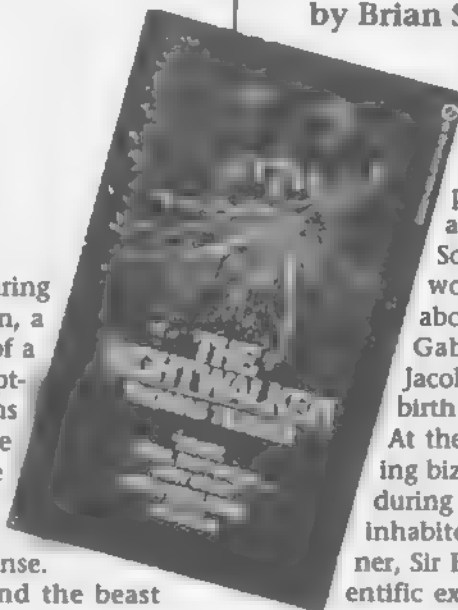
3. **THE ORPHAN**
by Robert Stallman
(Pocket, 1980)
4. **THE CAPTIVE**
by Robert Stallman
(Pocket, 1981)
5. **THE BEAST**
by Robert Stallman
(Pocket, 1982)

In the Midwestern United States during the years following the Great Depression, a beast trapped in a barn takes the form of a young boy to escape capture, and is adopted by a farmer and his wife. He remains with the couple, learning of life as the boy while at the same time roaming the night as a beast, until the family is harshly threatened by thieves and he becomes the beast to rise to their defense. There is no course then but flight, and the beast

moves on to resume his human form elsewhere. He experiences growth at different paces simultaneously, as a human and as an animal. Life after life is begun, only to be frustrated by the competing natures which cannot be quietly contained within one being. At last, he finds another, a female, like himself. They risk everything in the reenactment of an ancient ritual, convinced that to do so will complete their strange destinies and allow what must follow to take place.

Robert Stallman has written a superb trilogy that draws inspiration from the mythic tales of both the werewolf and Frankenstein's monster. By setting events in the small towns of our country's past, the author skillfully blends nostalgia and the innocence of both the beast and the human forms he takes. The story encompasses the development of a man from boyhood on, as seen through two distinct personalities; one of them a very sensually acute observer. The two minds contained within this being try to understand their purpose, allowing dialogues that contrast their emotional states and comment on other cultural myths: human and animal, good and evil, man and woman. The prose is clean, elegant, and enormously sensual, yet always direct. It is most regrettable that the author died before publication of the final volume, thus eclipsing any hope of further works from him.

6. **THE WEREWOLVES OF LONDON**
by Brian Stableford
(Simon & Schuster UK, 1990; Pan, 1991;
Carroll & Graf, 1992)
7. **THE ANGEL OF PAIN**
by Brian Stableford
(Simon & Schuster UK, 1991; Pan, 1992;
Carroll & Graf, 1993)



In Victorian London, young Gabriel Gill discovers that he possesses unusual powers. He is removed from the orphanage that has raised him by Mandorla Souller, leader of an ancient race of werewolves, who hopes to use his abilities to abolish the human race. Also interested in Gabriel's development is black magician Jacob Harkender, who had some hand in his birth and has his own intentions for the boy. At the same time, David Lydyard is experiencing bizarre visions due to a snake bite sustained during a trip to Egypt. It appears he has become inhabited by some other being. Lydyard's partner, Sir Edward Tallentyre, struggles to find a scientific explanation for these events. Gabriel and

David have become pawns in a vast struggle between ancient powers and fallen angels with the fate of the world hanging in the balance.

As years pass, David Lydyard is forced to form an alliance with Jacob Harkender and Mandorla Soulier in order to secure the safety of his family, while attempting to gain information from the being that first intruded into his consciousness in Egypt, which he now knows to be the goddess Bast, also manifesting itself as the Angel of Pain. Good and bad angels, through their human representatives, compete to gain knowledge that will assist them in their astral battle for domination.

These form the first two books in a trilogy by Brian Stableford (volume 3, *The Carnival Of Destruction*, is not yet available in the U.S.). It is a highly intelligent, complex, and well-written story, rich with period detail, colorful characters, kinky sex and lengthy philosophical speculations on the nature of reality and the supernatural. The werewolves' purpose is not simply to frighten, but to exist as players in a much larger drama. Stableford provides imaginative histories and motivations for the competing factions. The overall rationalist approach of the author brings an interesting perspective to a story filled with mythic creatures, magic and evil. It is not firmly in the horror tradition, but rather a dark fantasy in the vein of Clive Barker's recent novels.

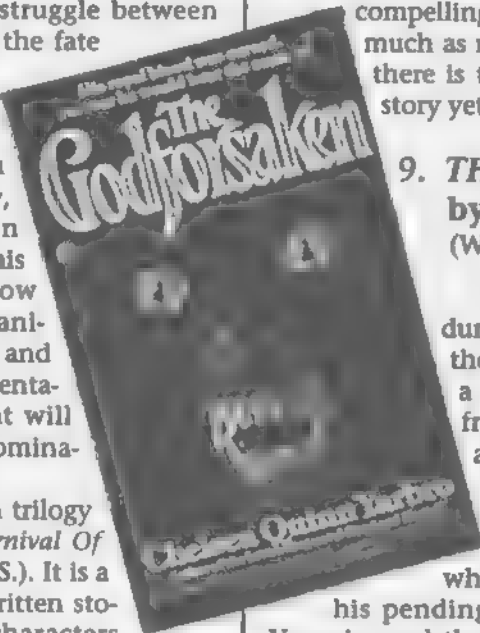
8. WILDING

by Melanie Tem

(Dell/Abyss, 1992)

In Denver, four generations of women have preserved their family secret and ritually initiated their daughters at the proper time. They are werewolves, outwardly manifesting their rage at societal expectations and family obligations. Deborah has failed her rite of passage and now roams the streets pregnant, confused and dangerous. The family must overcome their internal struggles and find the girl, to retrieve or destroy her. Deborah must protect herself, Julian, a boy she meets while on the run, and her unborn child until she is ready to act on their behalf.

Melanie Tem has devised an unusual werewolf story that downplays scenes of transformation and pursuit in favor of exploring the emotional conflicts that rage within this proud and once powerful family and one of their emotionally confused offspring. Tem's skill at communicating intensely personal moments, along with excellent characterization and dramatic sense, make this a



compelling book. It doesn't build to a big payoff, much as most people's life stories would not, and there is the lingering possibility of more to this story yet to be told.

9. THE GODFORSAKEN

by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro

(Warner, 1983)

Don Rolon, heir to the throne of Spain during the time of the Inquisition, carries the family curse visited upon his father by a unjustly condemned woman. He suffers from disturbing dreams each full moon, and fears he may be sleepwalking or worse, for there are mysterious deaths in the land at such times as well. Rolon must be very careful, for there are those who would plot his downfall and disrupt his pending marriage to the beautiful Zaretta of Venezia, and the Grand Inquisitor Juan Murador needs little provocation to send anyone he chooses to their death for crimes against God.

Chelsea Quinn Yarbro is an accomplished writer of historical fiction and a bitter critic of the selfish acts committed by those in the government and the Church. The struggles of her protagonist as he learns of his wolfish nature are small compared to the complex manipulations and betrayals within the royal court and among the church officials conducting heretical purges. The author's knowledge of history and period detail are extraordinary, her characters memorable, and her plotting excellent. None but a tragic end can come to those held in the grip of such powerful and corrupt forces. Yet it is also Yarbro's talent to bring out the dignity in even the least characters in this drama as they confront their fate. An excellent and memorable reading experience.

10. HEARTBEAST

by Tanith Lee

(Dell/Abyss, 1993)

Daniel Vehmund, an Englishman who has escaped a cruel father by traveling abroad, has his life changed by an encounter with a gemstone known as the Wolf. After seeing his reflection in the jewel, he becomes a wolf with each full moon. Fearful of discovery, he flees on a ship sailing back to Europe. Several crew members meet their deaths during passage, and suspicion falls upon Daniel. He is shot while trying to escape.

The plot shifts to tell of Laura, a farm girl suffering the indignities of jealous sisters and lazy, uncaring parents. She is courted by Hyperion Worth, a nobleman who has purchased the Vehmund estate. He makes a gift to her of the Wolf jewel.



Daniel, meanwhile, has survived his seemingly fatal wound, and is drawn to the magical precious stone and its present owner, Laura.

Despite the exotic flavor of its opening in the Near East, this dark fantasy has a strong grounding in the problems of everyday life. Contrasts are drawn between nobility and the poorer classes, societal expectations for men and women, and the traditions of fairy tales and life's harsher realities. Tanith Lee writes fantasy in a style that is at once sensual, ironic, witty and dark. She certainly has earned a place among the best of contemporary writers of the fantastic.

11. *WILDERNESS*

by Dennis Danvers

(Poseidon, 1991; Pocket Star, 1992)

This could be termed a love story wherein one of the characters is a werewolf, but that is over-simplifying. However, it does indicate that the author is concerned with emotional states rather than intricate plotting or thrilling adventures. There is little attention paid to transformations, chases, stalking prey, or guilt-ridden aftermaths.

Alice White, the werewolf of the story, is a lonely young woman who locks herself in the basement every month when the "change" comes upon her. Avoiding intimacy with others, she limits her contact with the outside world to her job, an occasional college course and a series of one-night stands with men picked up in bars.

This routine is disturbed when Alice meets Erik Summers, a biology professor who is recently divorced. The pair fall deeply in love. Alice decides to share her incredible secret with Erik, and he makes the classic lover's mistake: when challenged by total honesty, he hesitates. An attempt at reconciliation by Erik's wife adds to the emotional confusion, and Alice flees. Erik must decide where his heart really lies; if it is with Alice, he must follow her into the unknown and regain her confidence.

This is Dennis Danvers' first novel, and its effectiveness lies in describing the conflicting emotions of its characters. This pulls the reader past some plot implausibilities and makes for a satisfying book. The prose is simple, with an appropriate amount of detail giving weight to the description



of events. The author describes the innermost concerns of several different characters with admirable clarity. Turning the "Beauty and the Beast" tale on its head is an interesting and rewarding idea, though a more mature writer might have explored the mythological implications inherent in such a mixing up of roles. That does not take away from the pleasure of reading this book, which very successfully describes various individuals' responses to this situation with sensitivity and intelligence.

12. *WOLFEN*

by Whitley Strieber

(Morrow, 1978; Bantam, 1979))

Brooklyn homicide detectives George Wilson and Becky Neff are assigned to investigate the murders of two cops killed at the city's automobile impound lot. What they discover convinces them of the existence of a race of werewolves that have existed for centuries, forced by encroaching civilization into an increasingly urban existence. The detectives must convince others of the reality and urgency of this danger before the werewolves can silence them.

Whitley Strieber's contribution to the genre with this book is an important one. In depicting his creatures as an alien race apart from the dominant human culture, a form was struck that many other writers would use in their books (and one he himself continued to revise). This was Strieber's first success, and the novel does suffer from a somewhat forced hard-boiled style and the well-worn conceit of an "odd couple" partnership who remain

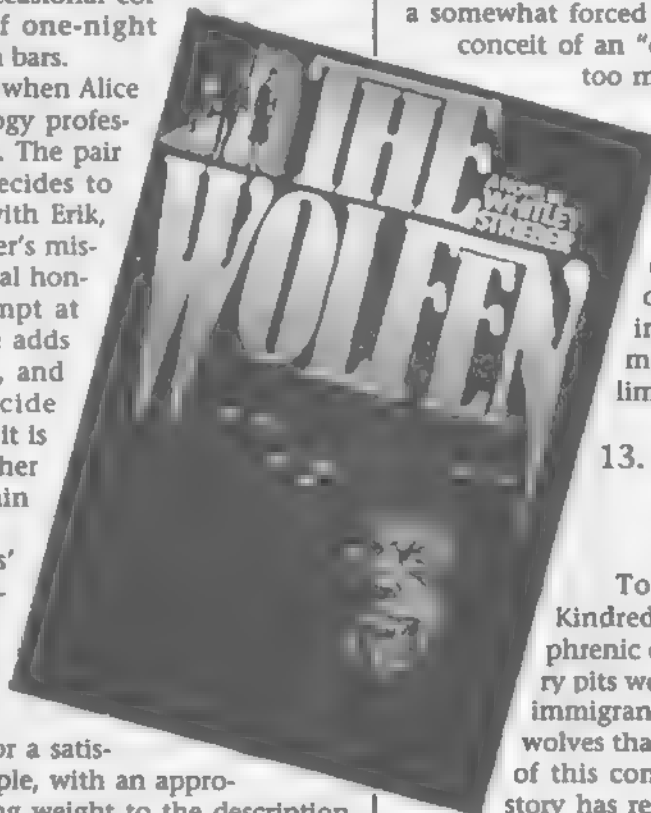
too much like their literary duplicates. But he correctly lets the story unfold in the manner of a police procedural, so that we learn about the wolfen along with the two detectives. Once their existence has been established, the wolfen are given their own narrative voice. Strieber's instincts serve him well, producing a memorable novel that overcomes its limitations.

13. *MOON DANCE*

by S. P. Somtow

(TOR hc, 1989; pb, 1990)

Told as a recollection by Johnny Kindred, currently hospitalized as a schizophrenic convicted of terrible murders, this story pits werewolves from amongst the European immigrants to the United States against werewolves that have been part of the Native peoples of this continent for centuries. The unfolding story has repercussions upon the present day, as



the young woman attempting to interview the shifting personalities held within Kindred's body begins to experience shocking events linked to the people dredged up from the past.

Somtow Sucharitkul has written what might be called an epic werewolf novel. It has immense scope, shifting lines of action, dozens of colorful characters, dense plotting, and a style that is simple, intelligent and earthy. Control of these elements is not always maintained; the author allows the narrative to move ahead roughly, or the characters to blurt out dialogue that seems unlikely. The racism in this country of the last two centuries is described in all its ugliness, and plays an important part in each of the story lines. Your patience with the rough spots will be rewarded. This is ultimately an entertaining book.

14. *HOUSE OF THE WOLF*

by Basil Copper

(Arkham House, 1983)

American professor John Coleridge is visiting Hungary to attend a conference on European folklore. He becomes the guest of Count Homolky, whose castle is known as House of the Wolf for a family curse of rumored Lycanthropy. A series of local murders casts suspicion on the Homolky family, and Coleridge leads the search for an elusive wolf that holds the answer to the present killings and may uncover the secrets of the castle's past.

British author Basil Copper counts among his authorial specialties the Victorian adventure story. His books are an acquired taste these days, with their slow accumulation of significant details, carefully developed atmosphere of menace and colorful language that harkens back to an early period of popular writing. Inexplicable for someone who can create good, evocative prose is his propensity for using absurdly obvious references in his names (the Hungarian village the book is set in is Lugos—Lugos/Lugosi, get it?). I am not nit-picking; one can find similar examples in his other books. Nonetheless, if you take any pleasure in reading such authors as Arthur Conan Doyle and Bram Stoker, you will find this book a pleasant diversion.

15. *THE WOLFMAN*

by Carl Dreadstone

(Berkley, 1977)

At this point in my list, I'm torn between addressing what I regard, for varying reasons, as inferior work for the sake of completion or concluding with a personal favorite, albeit a flawed example. Oh well. If you didn't see your favorite werewolf book in here somewhere, you're probably not reading this to the end anyway.

Ramsey Campbell has been a favorite author of mine for twenty-five years. Under the house-name of Carl Dreadstone, he wrote novelizations of *THE WOLFMAN* and two other classic Universal horror films, along with introductions to the books under his own name. Due to the extreme number of textual errors, and perhaps other editorial strictures placed upon him, Campbell reportedly has mixed feelings about these works. Nonetheless, his style is recognizable even with an inherited plot and necessarily simple narrative.

Larry Talbot returns to his family home in Wales after spending eighteen years in America. He meets Gwen, the daughter of a local shopkeeper. Although she is engaged to marry another, Gwen and Larry fall in love. A group of Gypsies enters town. Among them is Bela, a fortuneteller who is also a werewolf. Bela attacks a friend of Gwen's while he is in wolf form, and Larry comes to her rescue. Bela is killed by a silver-headed walking stick, but Larry is bitten in the struggle. An old Gypsy woman warns him that once bitten by a werewolf, Larry will become

one himself with each full moon. Fearful that Gwen will become a victim of the wolf, Larry gives his father the silver-headed cane to protect her with. Later, when he does attack Gwen, Larry is killed by his father, and reverts to human shape in death.

Screenwriter Curt Siodmak fashioned a fine story out of the simple plot for *THE WOLFMAN*, anchoring its mythic fears in domestic intrigues and father-son rivalry. Campbell provides an excellent introduction to the novel, with information about the original script and production of the film. His prose expands upon Siodmak's original intentions and his own insights, adding distinct new pleasures to this familiar story.



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Although never as popular in literature or film as his cousin, the vampire, the werewolf is one of the archetypal figures in horror fiction. And like other archetypes, he symbolizes one of the great fears of humanity, the fear of the animal which lives within us all, the beast who lurks in our deepest thoughts, prepared to leap up and rend our enemies if ever he is unleashed. A handful of werewolf novels are recognized as major works in the field—starting with Guy Endore's super *The Werewolf Of Paris*, continuing on up through such recent classics as Michael Cadnum's *Saint Peter's Wolf*—and they're discussed in articles elsewhere in this issue. Here, for good or ill, we'll look at some "other" contemporary werewolf novel (92 of them, to be exact).

The following annotated list is presented in chronological order. Note please that there are many more stories about supernatural shapechangers which I have excluded because they did not seem to me close enough to call them werewolf variants.

SILLY RATING SYSTEM

- 1 Fang A waste of good paper
- 2 Fangs Not overtly bad, but why bother?
- 3 Fangs Has its moments, though not a classic
- 4 Fangs Greatly underrated; a classic worth tracking down

Leslie H. Whitten, *Moon of the Wolf* (Doubleday, 1967; Ace, 1968). Pretty good mystery/suspense about a werewolf killer, although the supernatural element is minimal. 3 Fangs.

Clifford Simak, *The Werewolf Principle* (Putnam, 1967; Berkley, 1968). SF variation; more of an adventure story than horror. Written in Simak's quietly effective style and one of his better novels. 4 Fangs.

Jan Alexander, *The Wolves of Craywood* (Lancer, 1970). This was part of the pseudo-gothic boom of the 1960s. Several women are killed in savage attacks, and the young heroine suspects that the man she loves is a werewolf driven by the moon to commit horrible acts. It turns out that someone else is responsible, and although the culprit believes himself to be a werewolf, it's all very psychological. 1 Fang.

Patty Brisco, *The Other People* (Powell, 1970). Werewolves and other supernatural creatures are secretly living among us, and not all of them are evil. Occasionally clumsy but with some original ideas. 3 Fangs.

Florence Stevenson, *The Curse of the Conculens* (World

Publishing, 1970; Signet, 1972). A spoof of horror novels with vampires, werewolves, and lots of other things thrown in. Actually a pretty good attempt. 3 Fangs.

Evelyn Bond, *Doomway* (Beagle, 1971). Another gothic with most—but not all—of the supernatural elements explained away. There's a werewolf, or close approximation, hovering in the background. 1 Fang.

Frank Belknap Long, *The Night of the Wolf* (Popular Library, 1972). The discovery of an ancient cave leads to a deadly mix of magic and lycanthropy, but unfortunately not a whole lot of suspense. 2 Fangs.

Arthur M. Scarm, *The Werewolf vs Vampire Woman* (Gulld-Hartford Publishing, 1972). Novelization of a film that I'm happy to say I've never seen, written in an incredibly subliterate style by an author who apparently learned his English from a tourist's conversion guide. Special rating of Zero Fangs.

Dean R. Koontz, *A Werewolf Among Us* (Ballantine, 1973). One of Koontz's best straight SF stories, but also a fascinating rationalization and re-examination of the werewolf story. 4 Fangs.

Frank Lauria, *Lady Sativa* (Curtis, 1973). A typical Dr. Orient psychic adventure featuring a werewolf. 2 Fangs.

Michael Avallone, *The Werewolf Walks Tonight* (Warner, 1974). This was part of the Satan Sleuth series, and like the rest, the supernatural element is explained away. In this case the werewolf is just a deformed, crazed human being. 1 Fang.

Errol Lecale, *The Tigerman of Terrahpur* (New English Library, 1974). OK, it's a weretiger and not a werewolf—I included it anyway. Part of the Specialist series of supernatural adventures. Lecale is a pseudonym of W.A. Ballinger. 1 Fang.

Robert Lory, *The Curse of Leo* (Pinnacle, 1974). Painfully dull occult story with werewolves supposedly providing some of the

non-existent suspense. 1 Fang.

Guy N. Smith, *Werewolf by Moonlight* (New English Library, 1974). At first the werewolf here sticks to the moors, killing sheep. But then he acquires a taste for human flesh. 2 Fangs.

Robert Black, *Legend of the Werewolf* (Sphere, 1976). Another film novelization. 2 Fangs.

Gary Brandner, *The Howling* (Gold Medal, 1977). The first and best in Brandner's series, and one of the best werewolf novels ever. Truly suspenseful throughout, and a clever depiction of a secret society of shapechangers liv-

THE REST OF THE PACK

A mini-guide to lesser known werewolf novels

by Don D'Amassa

ing secretly in the interstices of our world. 4 Fangs.

Carl Dreadstone, *The Werewolf of London* (Berkley, 1977). Belated novelization of the classic film. Dreadstone is a pen name, used in this instance by Ramsey Campbell. 2 Fangs.

Gary Brandner, *Howling II* (Gold Medal, 1978). The sequel to Brandner's famous novel bears no relationship to the film sequel. The newscaster who uncovered the secret colony of werewolves is pursued by her husband, now one of the creatures, and his mate. 3 Fangs.

Guy N. Smith, *Son of the Werewolf* (New English Library, 1978). Sequel to *Werewolf by Moonlight*. More typical (pulpy) Smith fare. 2 Fangs.

Jay Callahan, *Night of the Wolf* (Leisure, 1979). The reticent citizens of a rural Tennessee town have a secret. The wolves that prowl the woods at night aren't all natural ones, and the untainted humans and shapechangers have come to an accommodation. 3 Fangs.

David Case, *Wolf Tracks* (Belmont Tower, 1980). A Toronto police detective is puzzled and alarmed by a series of brutal killings. He eventually realizes he is not dealing with an ordinary human being, but his associates—predictably—think he's losing his mind when he suggests that a werewolf might be responsible. 2 Fangs.

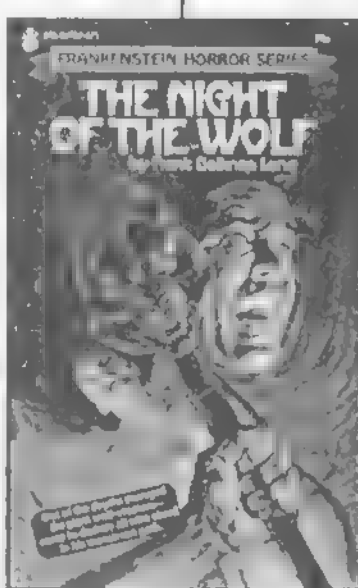
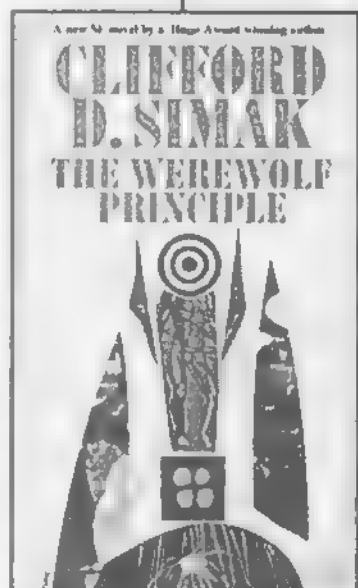
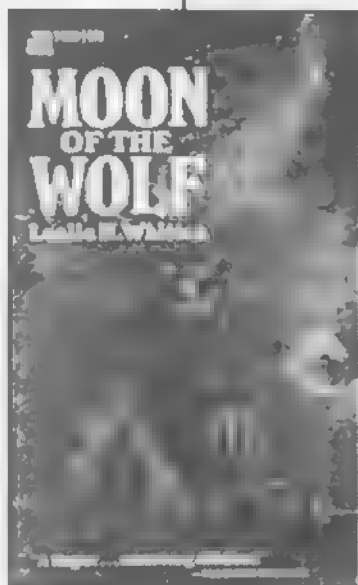
Galad Elflandsson, *The Black Wolf* (Centaur, 1980). An atmosphere of fantasy gives this variation a very different feel, although at times the story seems to have lost its way. 3 Fangs.

Rick Hautala, *Moondeath* (Zebra, 1980). This time the werewolf is prowling a small town in Maine, while hints of witchcraft complicate matters. Another novel that relies heavily on mood. A well told story, but not at the peak of this writer's work. 2 Fangs.

K.K. Leyton, *The Wolfman* (Star, 1980). Haven't actually seen this one.

Tanith Lee, *Lycanthia, or The Children of Wolves* (DAW, 1981). A young French nobleman seeks to discover the secret relationship between a group of peasants and a pack of wolves. 4 Fangs.

Edward Levy, *The Beast Within* (Berkley, 1981). They don't call the creature in this



one a werewolf, but the beast that emerges from the body of a tormented young man fits the definition. Made into a film that had a radically different plot. 3 Fangs.

Robert C. Sloane, *A Nice Place to Live* (Crown, 1981; Bantam, 1982). A bitter man gets revenge on his neighbors by changing his body into that of a powerful creature and hunting them down at night. 3 Fangs.

J.C. Conaway, *Quarrel with the Moon* (Tor, 1982). A researcher investigating a mysterious skeleton stumbles upon a secret colony of werewolves living in rural America. An obvious bow to Brandner, but still worth 3 Fangs.

Stephen Gallagher, *Follower* (Sphere, 1984). Based on a Norse myth—a half-man, half-wolf creature with the ability to take on the shape of its victims. 3 Fangs.

William W. Johnstone, *Wolfsbane* (Zebra, 1982). Nonsensical tale of a flower which blooms to warn off an onslaught of werewolves from another dimension, or maybe it's Hell. Who cares? Mindless gorefest. 1 Fang.

Otto Coontz, *Isle of the Shapeshifters* (Houghton Mifflin, 1983; Bantam, 1985). A young adult novel about an island which is home to an eerie force that transforms creatures within its realm. Werewolves are implied but the atmosphere is very dream-like and uncertain. 2 Fangs.

Anthony John, *The Predator* (Ballantine, 1983). A super suspense story about a being who is a sort of blend of werewolf and vampire. 4 Fangs.

Stephen King, *Cycle Of The Werewolf* (Land Of Enchantment, 1983; as *Silver Bullet*, NAL Signet, 1985). Not long enough to truly be a novel, but a brief, nicely constructed mystery. Which of the apparently normal people in a small town transforms periodically into a ravaging beast? Two youngsters try to solve the problem that confounds the adults. Filmed with reasonable success. Two Fangs.

David Robbins, *The Wereling* (Leisure, 1983). The werewolf in this one really likes changing shape and cutting people up into lots of little pieces. Very violent but not much story. 1 Fang.

Stephen King & Peter Straub, *The Talisman* (Viking, 1984; NAL, 1985). More of a fan-



tastic adventure across several worlds than a horror novel, but it does have a major werewolf character and some minor werewolf villains. 3 Fangs.

F.W. Armstrong, *The Changing* (Tor, 1985). A werewolf novel with an interesting twist. The victims of the creature are all business executives, and they're hunted down in the corporate jungle of endless corridors and offices. Armstrong is the pseudonym of T.M. Wright. 3 Fangs.

Gary Brandner, *Howling III* (Gold Medal, 1985). A further divergence from the film series. After the werewolf colony is destroyed, a werechild is adopted by humans, while one of the few adult survivors sets out to get the child back. 3 Fangs.

Richard Forsythe, *Fangs* (Leisure, 1985). A young girl has a mysterious affinity for a pack of wolves that lurk in the woods, eventually mates with one of them, and her child is capable of shifting back and forth between the two forms. An odd but uneven variation worth 3 Fangs.

Charles L. Grant, *The Dark Cry Of Th7*. One of three Oxrun Station novels dealing with traditional horror themes, in this case the werewolf. Moody and tense rather than resorting to the visceral explicitness of many otherwise similar novels. 2 Fangs.

Andrew Neiderman, *Love Child* (Tor, 1986). Another variant. A young woman is periodically infused with supernatural strength and malevolence, although she remains outwardly human. 2 Fangs.

Alan B. Chronister, *Cry Wolf* (Zebra, 1987). A transplanted housewife is seduced by a werewolf, much to her husband's dismay. He's deter-

mined to win her back, though, claws, fur coat, and all. 2 Fangs.

Jeffrey Goddin, *Blood of the Wolf* (Leisure, 1987). A formulaic but well-conceived standard werewolf story. The protagonist reluctantly accepts that several grisly murders have been caused by a werewolf and sets out to track the beast down. 3 Fangs.

John Halkin, *Fangs of the Werewolf* (Century Hutchinson, 1987; Barron's, 1988). Another standard werewolf story, helped along by the mysterious atmosphere of the Welsh moors. Aimed at young adult readers so it's low on gore, but fairly suspenseful. 2 Fangs.

Douglas D. Hawk, *Moonslasher* (Critic's Choice), 1987. Heavy emphasis on the occult here as an ancient Egyptian entity is summoned to the present and uses its powers to transform a human into a werewolf. Our hero has to find and use a magical talisman to defeat the monster. 3 Fangs.

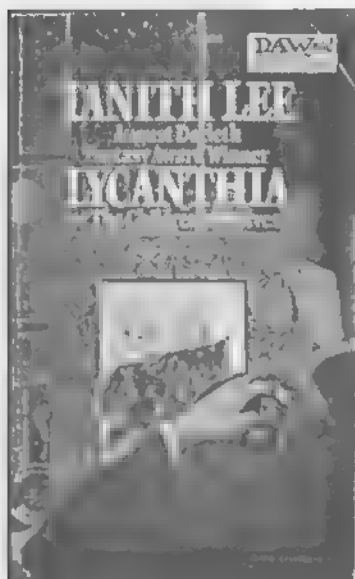
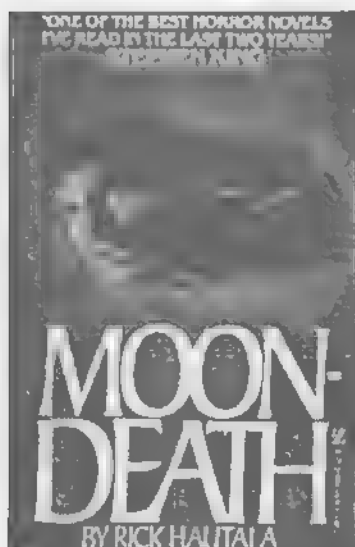
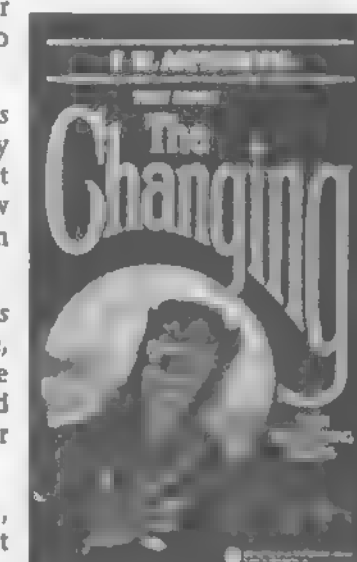
Mark Manley, *Throwback* (Popular Library, 1987). A genetic disorder causes people to periodically reshape their bodies into the forms of our primitive, and brutally violent, ancestors. 1 Fang.

Roger DiSilvestro, *Ursula's Gift* (Donald I. Fine, 1988). I've never seen this one, so you'll have to assign fangs for yourself.

Richard Jaccoma, *The Werewolf's Tale* (Gold Medal, 1988). Bitten by a werewolf, our protagonist decides to use his powerful new abilities to stop the Nazis. Ho hum adventure worth maybe 2 Fangs.

Robert Weinberg, *The Devil's Auction* (Owlswick, 1988; Leisure, 1990). Another occult adventure story in which werewolves (and lots of other creatures) play minor parts. 3 Fangs.

Jack Woods, *Wolffile* (Pageant, 1988). A variation of Robert





Stallman's classic series of a beast that assumes human form rather than vice versa. This one, however, likes the taste of human flesh. 2 Fangs.

Don & Jay Davis, *Sins of the Flesh* (Tor, 1989). The young boy who falls under the influence of a charismatic and probably supernatural religious leader is never specifically called a werewolf, but that's what he is. Despite a weak ending, this one is worth 4 Fangs.

Stephen R. George, *Beasts* (Zebra, 1989). A new virus releases human inhibitions and transforms their bodies. A werewolf novel in all but name, but barely worth 2 Fangs.

Art Bourgeau, *Wolfman* (Donald I. Fine, 1989). I've managed to miss this one, but heard good things about it when it first appeared.

Dean R. Koontz, *Midnight* (Putnam, 1989; Berkley, 1989). A scientist trying to make people more rationale instead transforms them into violent shapechanging creatures. Scientific rationale is pretty weak, but the story moves well. 4 Fangs.

Robert McCammon, *The Wolf's Hour* (Pocket, 1989). Michale Gallatin is a master spy during WWII, fighting for the Allies—and he is a werewolf. Using his unique talents, he must discover the secret of the Nazi Plan known only as Iron Fist in the dasy just before the Invasion of Europe. An entertaining supernatural adventure worth at least 3 fangs.

Al Sarrantonio, *Moonbane* (Bantam, 1989). An homage to the "B" film. Strange astronomical phenomena herald the arrival of a race of invading werewolves who spread their traits to their victims. Almost a superfluity of werewolves this time, in a broad-based gorefest. 3 Fangs.

Florence Stevenson, *Household* (Leisure, 1989). Werewolves and other monsters play supporting roles in this uneven horror novel. 2 Fangs.

Earle Westcott, *Winter Wolves* (Bantam, 1989). A disenchant-ed reporter travels to Maine where he becomes involved with a mysterious woman and a pack of even more puzzling wolves. 2 Fangs.

Peter David, *Howling Mad* (Ace, 1989). Spoof of the werewolf story, frequently quite funny though it goes on for a bit too long. 3 Fangs.

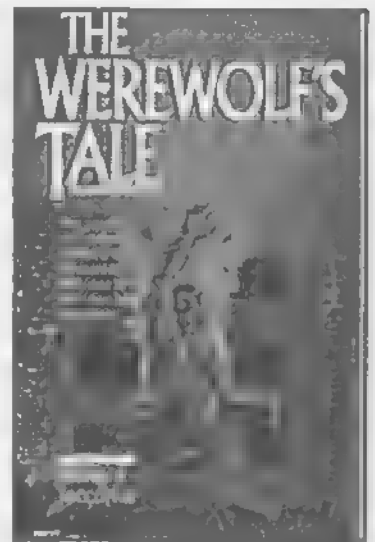
Jerry & Sharon Ahern, *Werewolves* (Pinnacle, 1990). The Nazis developed a cadre of werewolves as super-soldiers during the final years of World War II, but unaccountably failed to deploy them. The creatures have survived into the present, however, with their existence unsuspected until outsiders stumble into their territory. 2 Fangs.

Greg Almquist, *Wolf Kill* (Pocket, 1990). A bloody variation of the standard werewolf novel, a proud but mysterious family suffering under a recurring curse of lycanthropy. 2 Fangs.

Roger Edmondson, *Silverwolf* (Banned Books, 1990). A cross between the gay novel and the werewolf thriller. The werewolves possess the hypnotic powers associated with vampires, and there's plenty of gore. 2 Fangs.

Lee Hawks, *Night, Winter, and Death* (Ballantine, 1990). When an elderly man dies without the rites that would end his line, his spirit moves to another, transforming his victim into a werewolf. Loses its way at times. Hawks is a pseudonym of the late David Pedneau. 3 Fangs.

Garfield Reeves-Stevens, *Shifter* (Roc, 1990). A fantasy series, by





an author who's written some exemplary horror, which includes werewolves as characters. 3 Fangs, but as fantasy, not horror.

Jeffrey Sackett, *Mark of the Werewolf* (Bantam, 1990). An aging werewolf who wants to die finds himself pursued by a group of rightwing nuts who plan to use him to breed an army of superpatriotic and unstoppable soldiers. Not as silly as it sounds. 3 Fangs.

Crosland Brown, *Tombly's Walk* (Avon, 1991). A literature-re-examination of the werewolf story, the setting a small town plagued by a series of mutilation murders whose frenzy seems to imply an animal-like fury. A promising first novel. Three Fangs.

Geoffrey Caine, *Wake of the Werewolf* (Diamond, 1991)
Second in the Abraham Stroud psychic detective series. The hero discovers a plague of werewolves and destroys them. Pulp style action. Caine is a pseudonym of Robert Walker. 2 Fangs.

R. Garcia Y Robertson, *The Spiral Dance* (Morrow, 1991, Avon, 1993). An historical novel in which Catholic rebels are driven from England into Scotland, aided by a likable werewolf. Not exactly a werewolf novel but worth 4 Fangs as a fantasy.

Peter Rubie, *Werewolf* (Longmeadow, 1991). Here's another one I haven't read, nor even seen.

William Hill, *Dawn of the Vampire* (Pinnacle, 1991). A hodgepodge of ghosts, warring vampires, and werewolves that's long on violence and short on common sense, though there are a couple of scenes good enough to edge this up to 2 Fangs.

Brian Hodge, *Nightlife* (Dell Abyss, 1991). A powerful new narcotic turns its users into powerful, violent monsters for brief periods. They aren't called werewolves, but that's what they are. The drug lords in the story are far nastier though. 3 Fangs.

Tanya Huff, *Blood Lines* (DAW, 1991). A good witch and a benevolent werewolf team up to investigate a series of murders. Not much lycanthropy but an interesting mystery/adventure. 3 Fangs.

Richard Jaccoma, *The Werewolf's Revenge* (Gold Medal, 1991). Sequel to *The Werewolf's Tale*, with a good werewolf assassinating Nazis, who have recruited on their side some nasty mummies and zombies. Mediocre at best. 1 Fang.

Ronald Kelly, *Moon of the Werewolf* (Zebra, 1991). An interesting juxtaposition of European werewolves who have immigrated to rural America. 3 Fangs.

Ronald Kelly, *Something Out There* (Zebra, 1991). Not exactly a werewolf story, although there's a shapechanger in it. She's under the control of an elderly man, until he dies. 3 Fangs.

Nick Pollotta, *Bureau 13* (Ace, 1991). Werewolves and every other supernatural creature abound in this spoof of horror stories. 2 Fangs.

Garfield Reeves-Stevens, *Nightfeeder* (Roc, 1991). More fantasy with werewolves. Sequel to *Shifter*. 2 Fangs.

Jack Scapparo, *The Attic* (Zebra, 1991). The arrival of an elderly woman as a new tenant is accompanied by the onset of witchcraft and lycanthropy. A bit too busy at times. 2 Fangs.

Whitley Strieber, *The Wild* (Wilson & Neff, 1991; Tor, 1991). First the protagonist dreams that he's a wolf, then he begins to suspect it's really happening. Thoughtful, well developed suspense novel. 4 Fangs.





Steve Vance, *Shapes* (Leisure, 1991). The author plays with the werewolf theme here, concentrating on a group of people obsessed with the idea of tracking one down. 2 Fangs.

Tanya Huff, *Blood Trail* (DAW, 1992). Someone's murdering the peaceful werewolves of Toronto in this fantasy/mystery. Sequel to *Blood Lines*. 4 Fangs.

Gene Lazuta, *Vyrmin* (Diamond, 1992). Although not specifically called werewolves, the secret race preying upon humankind fits the definition. Now their secret is out, and only one species will survive. 3 Fangs.

Joseph Locke, *Kiss of Death* (Bantam Starfire, 1992). For young adults, but this is a quite suspenseful story of a teenager werewolf, and one of the few to feature a female monster. Locke is the pseudonym of Ray Garton. 3 Fangs.

Cheri Scotch, *The Werewolf's Kiss* (Diamond, 1992). A romance novel about a young woman and the peculiar problems of the man she loves. Despite the concessions to the romance form, this deserves 3 Fangs.

Wayne Smith, *Thor* (St. Martins, 1992). Thor, a German shepherd living with a human family, is the only one who realizes that Uncle Ted, who's come to stay with the family, is really a werewolf. An interesting tale utilizing the dog's point of view. 3 Fangs.

Jane Toombs, *Under the Shadow* (Roc, 1992). An historical romance in which a young woman's new acquaintance turns out to be a benevolent werewolf. 2 Fangs.

John Peel, *Blood Wolf* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1993). A bitter

rivalry about the succession to an ancient throne causes a young man to commit such a horrible crime that he is transformed into a werewolf. 2 Fangs.

Cheri Scotch, *The Werewolf's Touch* (Diamond, 1993). The course of lycanthropic love continues to be a troubled one in this sequel to *The Werewolf's Kiss*. 3 Fangs.

John Skipp & Craig Spector, *Animals* (Bantam, 1993). On the skids after the breakup of his marriage, Syd becomes involved with a beautiful woman who turns out to be one of several very dangerous werewolves. One of the better treatments of the theme in a modern setting. Three Fangs.

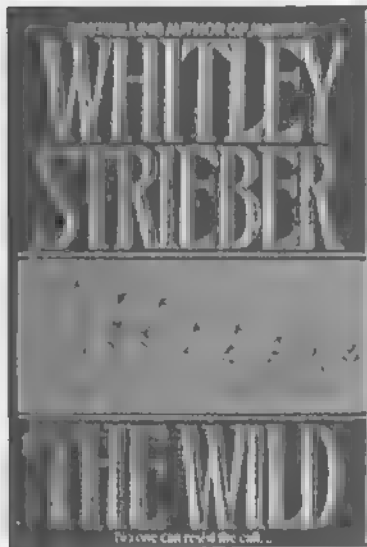
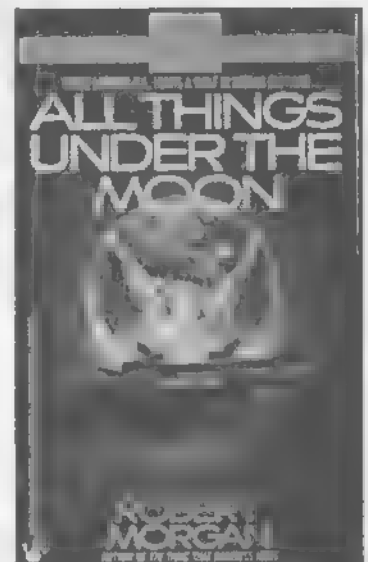
D.M. Wind, *The Others* (Leisure, 1993). The nasty werewolves in this one seem to have come from another dimension. 1 Fang.

Robert Morgan, *All Things Under the Moon* (Berkley, 1994). Teddy London is a detective who specializes in supernatural cases, and this time he's after a reluctant but still very dangerous werewolf. 3 Fangs.

Cheri Scotch, *The Werewolf's Sin* (Diamond, 1994). Another werewolf shows up in New Orleans, throwing an already tempestuous romance into even greater jeopardy. Sequel to *The Werewolf's Touch*. 3 Fangs.

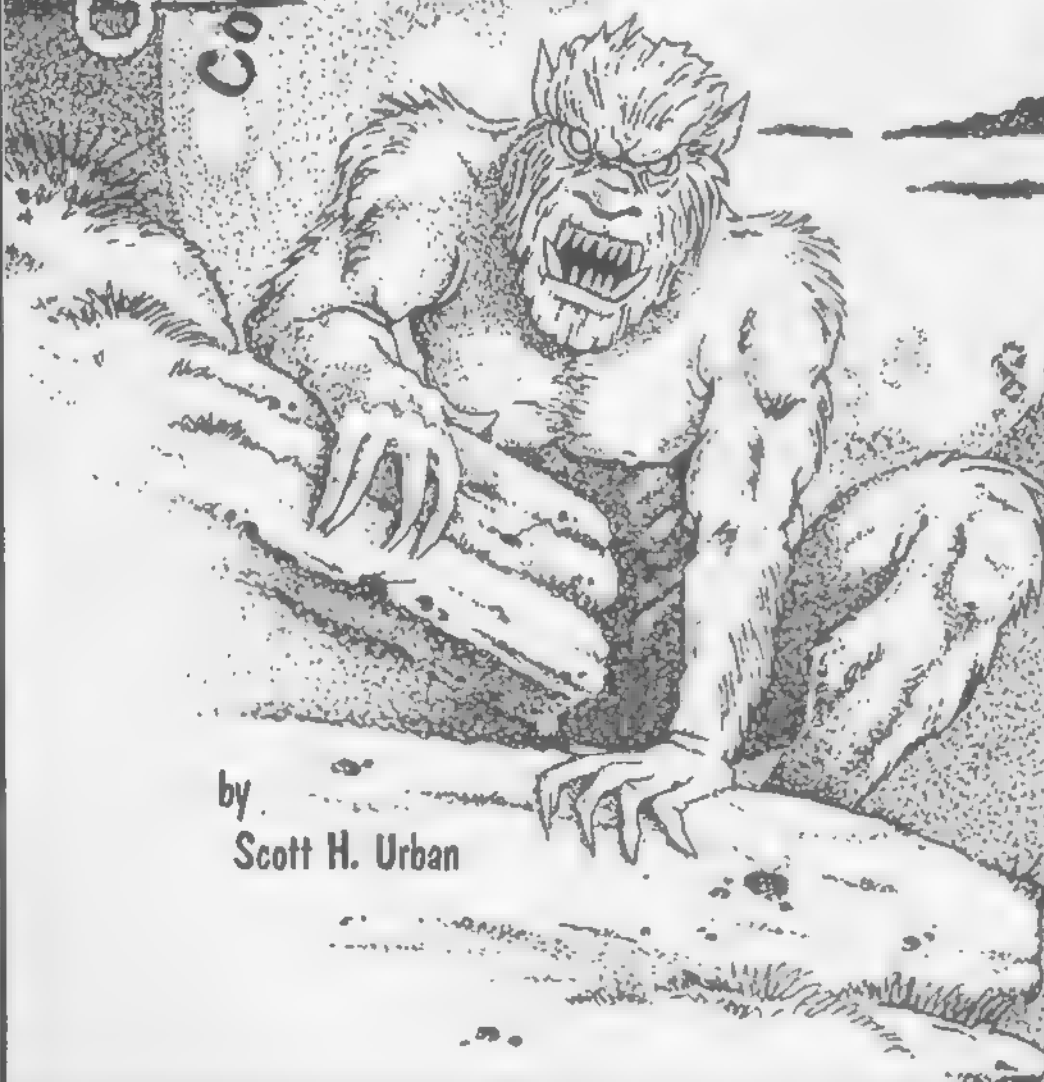
Jane Toombs, *The Volan Curse* (Silhouette Shadows, 1994). The protagonist falls in love with an amnesiac, then discovers that he suffers from lycanthropy as well. A romance novel.

Nancy Collins, *Wild Blood* (Roc, 1994). A werewolf variation set against the backdrop of a rock band. Typically high quality work from Collins. 4 Fangs.



GOING THROUGH CHANCES
Contemporary Short Werewolf Fiction

by
Scott H. Urban



"He has become one of the creatures of darkness, an obscenity on the face of the earth, a being with no right to existence. He lives in dread of the transformation and the mornings after, wondering who next will fall to the fury of his claws and fangs. He cries to whatever God he knows, pleads for release, begs for death to save himself and so many others, searching frantically for some manner of forestalling the next change.

"Such is the peculiar hell of the werewolf."

— Drake Douglas, *Horror!* (Macmillan, 1966)

1. "Like a Madness"

I will never forget running across the above book on the library shelves.

It was summer, and I was looking for something at the Army post library to fill the long afternoons until school began again. I had already devoured most of the suspense novels in the juvenile section and was now venturing into the adult fiction stacks.

The title was the first thing that caught my attention: *The Berserkers* (Trident, 1974). Reaching out and pulling the volume into my anxious hands, I was next struck by the cover illustration: a fanged and dreadlocked demon sitting behind a car's steering wheel. Although I didn't realize it at the time, the anthology would be my introduction to a new kind of writing—not strictly horror, nor science fiction, nor psychological suspense, but a mixture of all these elements and more, a genre that would later be termed "dark fantasy."

It is appropriate, in more ways than one, to begin an overview of short fiction of lycanthropy with this Roger Elwood 1974 anthology. Elwood is almost single-handedly responsible for keeping the werewolf short story alive during the late '60s and '70s by including at least one tale of lycanthropy in each of his many theme-oriented horror collections.

Arthur Tofte's contribution to this anthology, "The Berserks," is a good place to begin our survey. In chronological terms, its setting is the earliest of all stories we will examine. Although nothing overtly supernatural occurs, Tofte's story may indeed bring to light the origins of the werewolf legend in Northern Europe. During the waning years of the Viking invasions, young Asleik Audmundsson tries to decide his destiny: to take over his father's smithy, or to join a band of berserk warriors led by Gorm, the son of the local jarl.

Although the father urges his son to resist the call of battle, Asleik becomes one of Gorm's crew. At first he revels in the camaraderie, the sensation of being one of "Odin's men." But when Gorm and his followers ravage one of their own countrymen's outposts, Asleik realizes there is no honor or glory in the berserk rage:

With a kind of crazed madness,
Gorm's men hacked and slashed at the

old man and the two boys. Within seconds the three were cut down in a bloody heap. Even after they were dead, their bodies were chewed up savagely by the swords of Gorm's men, like the scraps of flesh and bones of a deer run down by a pack of wolves. A pack of wolves! That's what these men were, Asleik realized. He had heard that berserks could not stop once they started a fight. But this was no fight between warriors.

Asleik turns against his shipmates, helping a rescue party defend the outpost. After a desperate struggle, Asleik slays Gorm and returns home. Confronting his father, the old man confesses:

I have never told you, but once I was a berserk, and I know the strange, unexplainable power that comes over one when the berserk rage hits. ...

What you have not learned is that a berserk is not really an Odin's man at all. It's something that goes back long ages before Odin was ever worshiped. The Lapps have this power. To them it is a part of their lives—the daily respect they give to the gods of old. Not Odin. But the old, old gods that still roam the great vastnesses of the snowy uplands....It's a supernatural power. It only comes to some men, like a madness. It is a force that takes over the mind and body. No, my son, a berserk is not under the control of Odin but of much more evil forces, of ancient gods who yearn to depose the gods in Asgard.

In succinct form, the statements of Tofte's Scandinavian contain many of the assumed characteristics of the literary lycanthrope, at least up until very recent fiction.

First of all, there is the assumption that, whatever the origin of the transformation into animal, it proceeds from *outside* the individual. The lycanthrope is either infected by the bite of another, cursed by some outside source, inherits the disease through the bloodline, or in some other manner has this condition foisted upon him or her. 'It only comes to some men,' says Audmund, 'a force that takes over the mind and body.' Only recently, in such works as Cheri Scotch's *Werewolf* trilogy (see my review elsewhere in this issue), does an individual welcome or even actually seek out the ability to transform him- or herself into an animal.

Second, there is the understanding that something in this transformation is inher-



ently *wrong*, if not out-and-out *sinister*. 'A berserk is under the control of evil forces,' states Asleik's father. Somehow, reverting back to a more 'primitive' or 'natural' state is seen as a violation of the accepted order.

Ecologists and environmentalists have enlightened most of us to the point where we realize the traditional notions regarding lupine behavior are erroneous. Wolves rarely, if ever, attack humans. They have a remarkably sophisticated social organization. They never embark on 'murderous rampages,' but instead kill only as necessity dictates. Far from being a malicious predator, the wolf would seem to be a 'nobleman' of the wild. How did such an inimical stigma become attached to identification with the wolf?

We can only imagine the mindset of European populations during what we blithely call the "Dark Ages." For centuries, mankind had been trying to arrange acceptable standards of conduct between peoples. Christianity gave Europeans a benchmark by which to gauge their behavior. Attention was not meant to be focused on earthly, material goods, but on an unblemished spiritual state few can even intellectually conceptualize, let alone achieve. To ignore the Godhead—to go against "civilized" rules and mores—was to lose the distinction between man and animal, the 'natural' and the 'divine.' To identify with a *beast*—to lose sight of one's salvation in faith—must have signaled a diseased mind, a depraved personality.

The 'natural' world—which operates without morals or etiquette—must be distant from the Kingdom of Heaven, and therefore 'bad.' Once in human form, the return to animalistic behavior can only be 'evil.'

And that solitary one, the recluse who refuses to cooperate with our community, must not be like we are. . .

He is affected, a 'lone wolf' . . .

As if with a madness.

2. The Werewolf Clan

Other commentators have observed that, unlike the literature of vampires, werewolves really have no literary 'touchstone' (unless one accords that credit to Guy

Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris*). But ever since I have read it, the one work that embodies the werewolf mythos for me is H. Warner Munn's "The Werewolf of Ponkert." Although I have never seen the story's original appearance in *Weird Tales* (1925), I was fortunate enough to find the 1976 Centaur Press edition (which also contains the novellette "The Werewolf's Daughter"). The book's introduction relates the now-famous tale of its inspiration: H. P. Lovecraft wrote a letter to *WT* wondering why no one had written a story from a werewolf's point of view. Munn, who had not yet met 'the Old Gent,' took up the challenge and penned "The Werewolf of Ponkert."

Wladislaw Brenryk is a trader in fifteenth century Hungary. On his way home he is menaced by the wolfpack of the Master, an enigmatic figure who demands Brenryk's allegiance after the trader manages to kill one of the creatures. The Master's servitors in no way resemble actual wolves; in fact, the following unsettling description of a lycanthrope has rarely been equalled:

Far from being wolves, as my thought had been, they were great gray animals, the size of a large hound, excepting the leader, who was black and more the size and shape of a true wolf. All, however, had the same general characteristics. A high, intelligent brow, beneath which gleamed little red pig-like eyes, with a glint of a devil in their glance; long and misshapen hind quarters, which lent them a rabbit lope when they ran; and most terrifying of all, they were almost hairless and possessed not the slightest rudiment of a tail!

Against his will, Brenryk is forced to participate in the pack's nocturnal raids of terror. Unable to forestall his transformation, he kills his wife—and, he believes, his daughter. When finally captured and taken into custody, he agrees to lead the king's soldiers against the pack. All of the werewolves are cornered and killed, but the Master escapes. Brenryk completes his narrative on the eve of his execution, fully aware he will be flayed alive and yet resigned to his fate.

Munn's tale moves along at the best breakneck, pulp-style pace—which I consider a recommendation. Since the



story is told in first person, the reader identifies with and is moved by Brenryk's dilemma. There is a lingering sense of mystery which remains long after the story is over

—a sense of mystery that Munn should have left well enough alone.

"The Werewolf of Ponkert" was enough of a success with WT's readership that Munn began to write sequels to the original tale, describing the exploits of Brenryk's descendants who are "hounded" by the Master. Collected as *Tales of the Werewolf Clan I* and *II* (Grant, 1979 and 1980), it is unfortunate that none of these succeeding chapters live up to the inventiveness or writing quality of the original. The overall title is a bit of a misnomer, since none of Brenryk's descendants become lycanthropes. Munn evidently felt compelled to explain the Master's history and motivations, but it is actually a bit of a let-down to learn he is simply an alien whose spirit was trapped on earth during the Babylonian era. The last redeeming moment in the series is a cameo appearance by Wladislaw Brenryk's ghost, who returns to avenge himself against his tormentor.

3. The Werewolf Trace: The '60s and '70s

During the '60s, most stories with shape-shifters appeared in paperback horror anthologies and were reprints from older works or pulp magazines. In 1965, Bernhardt J. Hurwood resurrected (no, not edited, *resurrected*; it says so on the cover) several classic tales for his *Monsters Galore* anthology. As with most of Hurwood's collections, he can't seem to decide whether he is presenting horror fiction or "true-life" anecdotes of the occult; I can handle either slant on its own merits, but I find it un-nerving to mentally "switch gears" in the middle of a volume. ("Okay, right now am I trying to believe this really happened in our world, or am I reading someone's fiction, which I will judge on literary terms?")

Included in *Monsters* are "The Eyes of the Panther" by Ambrose Bierce, "The Werewolf" by Frederick Marryat (also reprinted as "The White Wolf of the Hartz Mountains"), "The Mark of the Beast" by Rudyard Kipling, and "The Were-Tiger" by Sir Hugh Clifford.

"The Werewolf" is an excerpt from Marryat's novel *The Phantom Ship*, first published in 1839. Even today it remains a chilling piece, uncharacteristically grim for the time. The self-exiled Krantz lives in a forbidding mountainous region with his three children, having murdered his wife and her lover, Krantz's former lord. While in pursuit of an immense white wolf, Krantz meets the strangers Wilfred and Christina and brings them back to his cottage.

The newcomers purport to be travelers from Krantz's homeland, Transylvania. The recluse weds Christina, acceding to Wilfred's decidedly un-Christian vows: "I swear by all the spirits of the Hartz Mountains...that my hand shall never be raised against [Christina]...and if I fail in this my vow, may all the vengeance of the spirits fall upon me and my children; may they perish by the vulture, by the wolf, or other beasts of the forest; may their flesh be torn from their limbs, and their bones blanch in the wilderness..."

Upon Wilfred's departure, the new wife wanders the night in the form of a wolf. There follow some effectively suspenseful moments, since the children realize the step-mother's true nature, but are too intimidated by their father's gruff demeanor to tell him. Christina kills two of the children before the younger Krantz works up enough courage to confront his father with the truth. The revelation scene is still bloodcurdling, more than 150 years later:

Imagine his horror, when he...beheld, as he advanced towards the grave, not a wolf, but his wife, in her night-dress, on her hands and knees, crouching by the body of my sister, and tearing off large pieces of the flesh, and devouring them with all the avidity of a wolf. She was too busy to be aware of our approach...

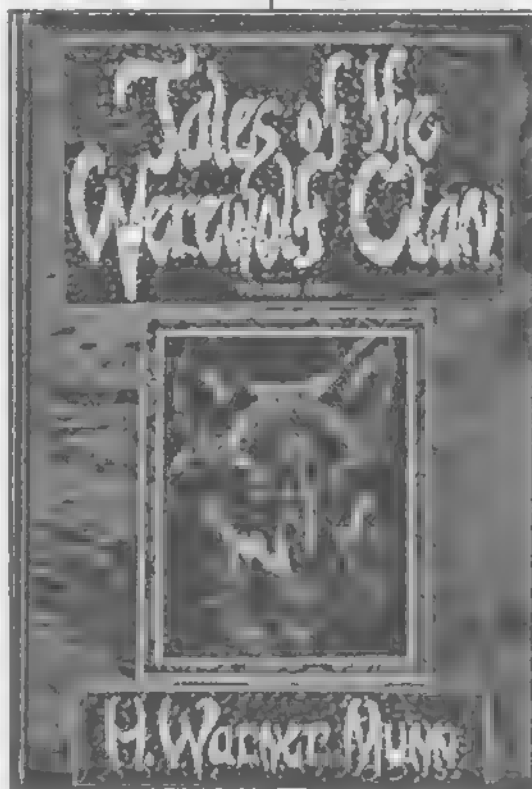
The horrified husband shoots and kills his ghoulish wife but later descends into madness, aware he has been a victim of supernatural manipulation. The younger Krantz is doomed by his father's ill-considered

vow; he is carried off by an enormous tiger on an Oriental island.

"The Werewolf" can also be found in *A Walk With the Beast*, edited by Charles M. Collins (Avon, 1969), *Shapes of the Supernatural*, edited by Sean Manley and Gogo Lewis (Doubleday, 1969), and *The Dark Dominion* (Paperback Library, 1970).

1970 saw the publication of *The Dark Shadows Book of Vampires and Werewolves* (did anyone even then actually believe its contents were "selected by Barnabas and Quentin Collins of ABC-TV's hit show"?). Even the title is slightly misleading, since the sole fictional story of lycanthropy is Bruce Elliott's "Wolves Don't Cry." Originally published in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* in 1954, the tale has been reprinted often enough that, just as the climatic revelation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, most people are aware of the plot twist without having read the actual piece.

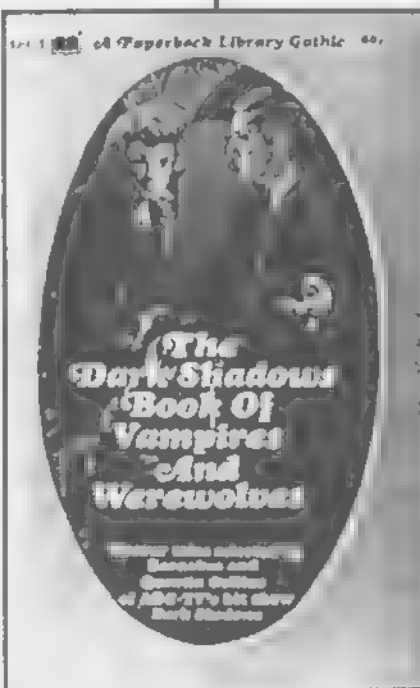
The wolf Lobo has long since reconciled himself to his



zoo confinement. But when he wakes up one morning to find himself sharing the same physical form as his captors, his relatively comfortable existence is shattered. Unable to explain or even properly make sense of his dilemma, Lobo is effectively *broken* into the *two-leggeds'* modes of behavior. The story's tone is, by turns, humorous and disconcerting; with the unique perspective, readers are able to look at human conventions through an alien perception: "[He couldn't] understand why they wanted him to do such absurd things as encumber his legs with cloth that flapped and got in the way, or balance precariously on his hind legs, or any of the other absurdities they made him perform." The story helps point out the relativity of horror: Lobo, in human form, "takes" a young woman; from our point of view we can only term it "rape," but Lobo is quite naturally responding to her scent and his own true being.

The Dark Dominion (1970) was deliberately packaged to look like another entry in the "Dark Shadows" series, with its gold cover and oval-framed cover illustration, but it really had no connection to the Gothic day-time soap. It was, however, more fairly balanced in its presentation of werewolves and vampires than the previously-discussed volume. Along with Marryat's "The Werewolf," also included are Peter Fleming's "The Kill" and Jane Rice's "The Refugee." In the former story, a male bastard is "granted" lycanthropy by his wronged mother so that he can eliminate the heirs to a British lord's estate. "The Refugee" is set in war-time Paris, where an American debutante—who appears certain to be a werewolf's next meal—disarmingly turns the tables on her stalker.

Karl Edward Wagner's anti-hero Kane may be the most interesting character in the "sword-and-sorcery" genre. Kane looks out only for himself, frequently deceives his own compatriots, and is not above striking deals with demonic forces. Although it is never explicitly stated anywhere in the series, Wagner drops enough hints that the reader understands Kane is actually the Biblical Cain, the original betrayer and bloodletter. In the novella "Reflections for the Winter of My Soul," included in the collection *Death Angel's Shadow* (Warner Paperback, 1973), Kane must pit his strength and cunning against a werewolf in a mythic kingdom. Wagner masterfully sets up an Agatha Christie-like "And Then There Were None" scenario in a snowed-in northern estate. Someone at Baron Troylin's castle is a werewolf, quickly picking off the



unwary humans. Which one is the creature of darkness?—the Baron, his beautiful daughter, his deranged son, the court wizard, the minstrel, the captain of the guards, or someone else? Even Kane falls under suspicion before he can reveal the monster. Although I won't give away the shape-shifter's identity, I will state that this story, like Elliott's "Wolves Don't Cry," employs a "were-man," a wolf who assumes human form.

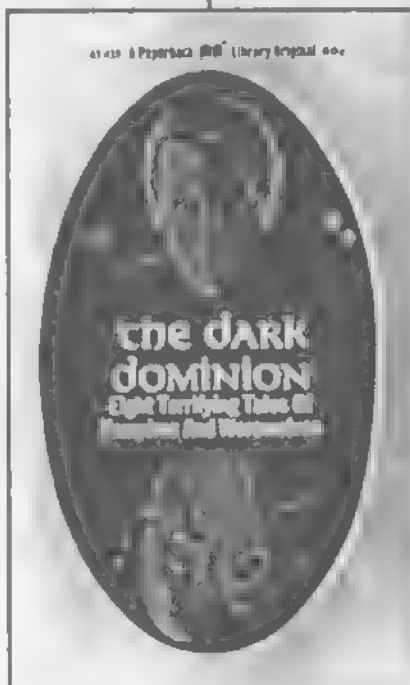
Stephen King's sole contribution to the literature of transmogrification, aside from the rather pedantic and uninspired *Cycle of the Werewolf*, was 1978's "The Night of the Tiger." Originally published in the February *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, it can probably more easily be found in *The Year's Best Horror Stories: VII*, edited by Gerald W. Page (DAW, 1979). Eddie Johnston works as a roustabout for the seedy "Farnum & Williams' All-American 3-Ring Circus and Side Show." During a blisteringly-hot Midwestern summer, he witnesses the mysterious confrontation between Mr. Indrasil, the big-cat tamer, and the enigmatic Mr. Legere, who tells Eddie to think of him as a "policeman." Somehow situated in the middle of their silent conflict is the tiger Green Terror, "a huge, beautiful specimen with a flawless striped coat, emerald eyes, and heavy fangs like ivory spikes." Discreetly yet mercilessly, Indrasil tortures the big cat. Finally, in Oklahoma, with a tornado bearing down on them, Indrasil, distracted and drunk, mutters to the narrator: "We're two of a kind, him and me. Maybe the only two left. My nemesis—and I'm his....Always had the power more'n me. Fool could make a

million—the two of us could make a million if he wasn't so damned high and mighty...."

Legere frees Green Terror. The tiger becomes the object of a psychic battle of wills. Eventually Green Terror mauls Indrasil; yet, later, two tigers are found dead...

The story is one of King's more intriguing short efforts, due to what he leaves unexplained. Why has Legere set himself in opposition to Indrasil? Is Legere, too, a shapechanger? If he is a "policeman," is he a representative of other, more powerful forces? Why hasn't he destroyed Indrasil long ago?

One of the most provocative works to emerge from the '70s was Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber and Other Adult Tales* (Harper & Row, 1979). This sadly-overlooked anthology deserves a prominent position in any comprehensive collection of dark fantasy fiction.



Taking as her starting point well-known "fairy tales," Carter stands the originals on their mythic heads. "Beauty and the Beast," "Bluebeard," and "Puss in Boots," among others, are re-interpreted from a decidedly feminist point of view, but at the same time they retain literary 'shock value.' Two stories are particularly germane to our overview: "The Werewolf" and "The Company of Wolves," both of them reworkings of the "Little Red Riding Hood" archetype.

In the former, a child on her way to Gran's house defends herself against an attacking wolf—who is later revealed to be the grandmother herself. In "The Company of Wolves," later made into a worthwhile film of the same name, the "little latecomer" in her red shawl encounters a singularly attractive young man in the woods. Parting ways on a bet, he arrives first at their destination, devours Grandmother, and masquerades as his victim in anticipation of a second meal. Carter pulls the rug out from under the reader by having the "pretty and youngest" strip off her clothes and knowingly welcome the predator's embrace: "she knew she was nobody's meat."

All of Carter's stories are awash with an open, frank eroticism and a mysterious, mythic atmosphere:

The wolf is carnivore incarnate and he's as cunning as he is ferocious; once he's had a taste of flesh, then nothing else will do...

The wolfson is the sound of the rending you will suffer, in itself a murdering...

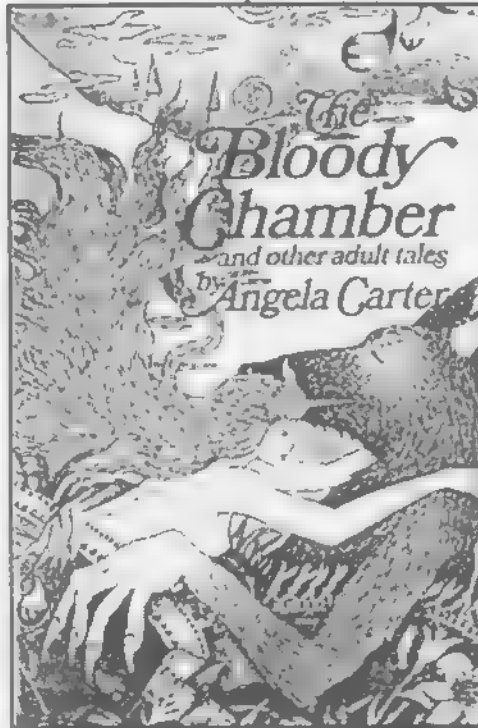
The wolves have ways of arriving at your own hearthside. We try and try but sometimes we cannot keep them out...Flee and fear the wolf; for worst of all, the wolf may be more than he seems.

Convincingly stated, in language approaching poetry, Carter may best approach the elusive lure of lycanthropy: that unrestrained, irrational impulse to lust, to take, to possess, and to destroy whatever cannot be made one's own.

Michael Moorcock, Elric's creator, touches on a similar theme in his disturbing short story "Wolf," available both in the author's collection *The Deep Fix* (1966) and in Marvin Kaye's *Masterpieces of Terror and the Unknown* (GuildAmerica, 1993). The unnamed narrator questions his rescuer—and future victim:

"There are wolves and there are sheep," I say, as I have often said. "Which do you think you are?"

"Neither," says she.



"Then you are sheep," say I. "The wolves know what they are—what their function is. I am a wolf."

Is Moorcock's narrator insane—or is he merely more insightful than the rest of us? Is it true that there exist only the hunter and the hunted, in spite of our religions, philosophies, and ethics?

This may be the fundamental question at the heart of the werewolf myth.

4. The Elwood Anthologies

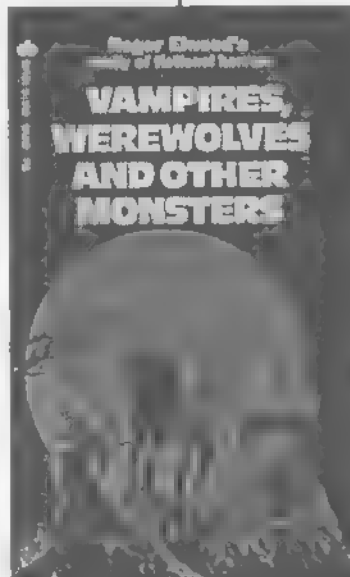
I have accorded Roger Elwood his own section in this overview in recognition of his numerous contributions to the horror field and his willingness to include previously-unpublished werewolf stories in his many anthologies. I have already discussed at length *The Berserkers* (which I highly recommend; in addition to the aforementioned Arthur Tofte story, *Berserkers* contains superb contributions from James Blish, Barry N. Malzberg, R. A. Lafferty, and David Gerrold which can be found nowhere else).

Beware the Beasts (Manor Books, 1970), edited by Elwood and Vic Ghidalia, contains Kipling's "The Mark of the Beast," Grege La Spina's "The Tortoise-Shell Cat," and, perhaps the best lycanthropic selection, Fritz Leiber's "The Hound" (originally published in *Weird Tales*, 1942).

"The Hound" is unrelievedly claustrophobic; upon finishing this still-relevant harangue against metropolitan living conditions, the reader comes away feeling soiled and grimy. David Lashley is hemmed in by his job, his dependent parents, and his inability to connect with others. In a series of un-nerving encounters he comes to realize the soulless apathy of the city. But even when he tries to escape to the unsullied, untainted countryside, his path leads him among the cages of a zoo where he is surrounded by wolves. The creatures become symbols of the inner-city forces that endlessly grind at and wear away a population's humanity.

In a now-famous dialogue, one character presents Leiber's perspective on modern-day monsters, positing that each culture creates the demons it deserves:

Our culture becomes ripe for infection...Our culture suddenly spawns a horde of demons...They have a peculiar affinity for our culture. They're unique. They fit in....Why, they'd haunt us, terrorize us, try to rule us. Our fears would be their fodder...Yes, I think there'd be werewolves among our demons, but they wouldn't be much like the old ones. No nice, clean fur, white teeth, and shining eyes. Oh, no. Instead, you'd get some nasty hound that wouldn't surprise you if you saw it nosing at a garbage pail or



crawling out from under a truck...[It would] Look as if it belonged in a city and smell the same. Because of the twisted emotions that would be its food, your emotions and mine.

In light of our society's current crises—a pervasive drug trade, drive-by shootings, domestic abuse, and a general sense of malaise—Fritz Leiber can be seen, not so much as a prophet of doom, as perhaps a visionary “voice crying out in the wilderness.”

The companion volume, *Beware More Beasts* (Manor Books, 1975), contains Jack Williamson's “Wolves of Darkness” and Barry N. Malzberg's “A Summary of Events Leading Up to Bedlam.” Despite a promising title, Williamson's short novel is really in the realm of science-fantasy, with invaders from a parallel dimension inhabiting people, wolves, and corpses. Malzberg's chilling short story purports to be the account of a turn-of-the-century businessman who marries late in life, only to watch his voluptuous young bride metamorphosize into a scaly, gelatinous mound of protoplasm late at night. Unable to leave her during the day, when she appears normal (and maintains her ignorance of her affliction), the narrator finds himself—much to his own self-loathing and disgust—drawn to the squamous mass. “Summary” becomes an interesting exploration of Victorian attitudes towards self-identity, madness, and sex. Malzberg makes his narrator walk that infuriatingly ambiguous line between sanity and insanity. The reader is never quite sure whether the narrator is telling the truth or is actually off the deep end—the author sprinkles enough hints throughout the narrative that enable it to be interpreted either way, and it is left up to the audience to ultimately decide what has actually taken place.

In 1973 Elwood brought together *Monster Tales* (Rand McNally), which was primarily aimed at young adult readers but contains some entries worth examining. Despite a rather mundane title, Nic Andersson's “Werewolf Boy” is a suspenseful yarn about Stefan, a European peasant boy in the Middle Ages. Struck and humiliated by a sadistic baron, Stefan allows the witch Helga to put a spell of lycanthropy on him. In his transformed shape, the boy slaughters the baron's prized hunting dogs, but also unwittingly leads the soldiers to his doorstep. In an atypically downbeat denouement for a juvenile collection, Stefan loses his family and remains under the witch's curse, destined to carry out her bidding.

Another story in the collection, Brian T. LoMedico's “The Vrkolak,” follows almost exactly the same plotline, but with a decidedly more humorous tone. At summer camp, Billy Hopkins, pretty much a nebbish, is routinely victimized by his older cabin counselor Steve. After

encountering the local conjure woman, Billy turns into a gigantic frog-creature. The beleaguered boy uses his new attributes (startling appearance, powerful legs, and deafening croak) to revenge himself on the camp bully.

The cover and title of Elwood's 1974 anthology, *Vampires, Werewolves, and Other Monsters* (Curtis Books), make it appear as if the volume were also aimed at a juvenile audience. However, the stories are definitely adult-oriented, especially Thomas N. Scortia and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's “Who is Sylvia?”, which is *not* for the squeamish. Four selections have lycanthropy as their theme.

Steve Barnes' “Moonglow” achieves a haunting, dream-like quality. An itinerant werewolf becomes enamored of a “summer witch.” Despite their mutual attraction, he cannot rise above his animalistic instincts and a tragic climax ensues. In Robin Schaeffer's “Night of the Wolf,” a father informs his ten-year-old son that he will now come under the sway of an inherited lycanthropic curse. The father locks his son in his room—but neglects to shut the window. The boy wakes up an orphan, reveling in his new abilities. “Cry Wolf” is a minor effort by Basil Copper, who used the theme to much stronger effect in his novel *House of the Wolf*.

The most compelling story is Joseph Payne Brennan's “Diary of a Werewolf.” Despite the give-away title, Brennan's straight-forward prose and headlong pace carry this narrative of a vain and disdainful aesthete who retires to the country to recover from a heroin addiction. Some force in the surrounding landscape compels him to drop to all fours and stalk human prey. He undergoes no supernatural transformation, but like Germany's Stubbe Peter, he cannot resist the bestial urges that demand he kill and devour his own kind.

I suppose [readers] will be expecting me to report the growth of long hair on my legs, a sudden increase in the length of my canine teeth, etc. This is all nonsense dreamed up by hack fictioneers—melodramatic trappings, nothing more. But I am convinced that werewolves like myself have existed for centuries. Harassed peasants may have invented some of the trappings in the first place, but I can clearly see now that there is a solid basis in fact for the many legends which have come down through the ages. There must have been many like me! External trappings invented for effect are as nothing compared to the hidden horrors which exist unseen in convolutions of our brains—brains subjected to who knows what monstrous pressures, derangements, diseases, hereditary taints!

At last discovered, nearly lynched by the victimized townspeople, the “deranged” narrator is put on trial and sentenced to an asylum. An anonymous editor appends to the diary, “God grant that he there remain!”



Barnes' "Moonglow" and Bram Stoker's "Dracula's Guest" show up in Elwood and Howard Goldsmith's *Spine-Chillers* (Doubleday, 1978). Algernon Blackwood is represented by "Running Wolf," which may be the sole entry in this overview to depict a mutually beneficial relationship between a man and a shape-shifter. Malcolm Hyde retreats to the wilds of Canada for a fishing trip; there, his movements are "dogged" by a timber wolf. By turns frightened, appalled, and resentful, Hyde eventually strikes up a friendship with the beast, who displays remarkably human-like characteristics. Hyde assists the wolf in uncovering an unsanctified skeleton; upon performing the proper burial rites Hyde releases the age-old spirit of a brave trapped in lupine form.

Elwood pens his own contribution to the wolfman mythos in "Night Prowler," but unfortunately it is only a mediocre effort. When a string of unsolved killings strike a Pennsylvania town, a middle-school-aged boy is led to believe *he* is the perpetrator, changing with the full moon. But by the fifth page, even the dimmest reader has already picked up on the nearly underlined hints and tumbled to the fact that the *father* is the bloodthirsty fiend...only *later* will the son inherit the genetic curse.

Despite an awkward and predictable story, Elwood is to be congratulated for long championing the literature of lycanthropy.

5. It'll Put Hair on Your Chest

There have been several major anthologies devoted exclusively to short werewolf fiction. The first, and easily the best, is *Werewolf!*, edited by Bill Pronzini. The collection is divided into three sections: "Classic Stories," "Contemporary Tales," and "Two Visions of the Future." Aside from stories which have already been touched upon in this survey, other important selections include Clemence Housman's "The Were-Wolf" (Pronzini's anthology is the best place to find this wonderfully evocative and haunting novella), Saki's "Gabriel Ernest," James Blish's "There Shall Be No Darkness," and Peter S. Beagle's "Lila the Werewolf."

Originally published in *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in 1950, Blish's novella "Darkness" brings together a disparate group of artists at an isolated Scottish estate. Painter Paul Foote is a borderline alcoholic—and also the only one sober enough to put together the myriad clues that lead him to accuse visiting concert pianist Jan Jarmoskowski of being a *loup-garou*. As it turns out, Foote is correct, but he cannot convince anyone before Jarmoskowski escapes to the surrounding woods and starts beseiging the trapped party-goers. There follows a melange of witchcraft, pentagrams, familiars, and pseudo-scientific rationalizing which Pronzini praises but sounds more like a snake-oil sales-

man's pitch:

Protoplasm is a liquid. This pineal hormone lowers the surface tension of the cells, and at the same time it short-circuits the sympathetic nervous system directly through to the cerebral cortex...In any event, the result is a plastic, malleable body, within limits. A wolf is the easiest form because the skeletons are so similar.

Run that by one more time?

"Darkness" contains one tense scene where parties track the werewolf outside, and a fairly suspenseful climax, but in between, as I tend to find in a lot of Blish's writing, there are convoluted, illogical passages that leave me shaking my head in confusion.

From the perspective of the 1990s, Beagle's "Lila the Werewolf" is more and more a period piece, illuminating the waning days of the psychedelic '60s and "the Summer of Love." In light of AIDS, date rape, and spousal abuse, Lila Braun's lycanthropy appears charming, almost quaint. Luckily, we have a master prose stylist in Beagle, perhaps the only writer who could pull off this telephone exchange between Lila's lover Farrell and mother Braun:

"I've never seen her like this," he said.

"I don't know what's the matter with her."

"Oh, my God," Mrs. Braun whispered. She told him...

"I wish you'd told me before," he

said.

He was edging very cautiously toward the open window.

"It isn't a thing you tell people!" Lila's mother wailed in his ear. "How do you think it was for me when she brought her first little boyfriend—"

Farrell dropped the phone and sprang for the window.

Beagle's story may be the only one in the horror genre to include the word "Squaresville." The final scene, with Farrell, Mrs. Braun, an armed and deranged landlord, and several outraged dog owners all chasing the four-legged Lila through New York alleys, avenues and tunnels, is dizzyingly frenetic.

If Pronzini's *Werewolf!* presents the "A-list" of lycanthropy, then Peter Haining's un-exclamatory *Werewolf* (Severn House, 1987) showcases the "B-list"; stories that, for one reason or another, never achieved the status of *classic*. Still, all of the selections make for worthwhile reading, even if only for oddity's sake (for example, an incredibly juvenile prose rendering of "I Was a Teenage Werewolf" by Ralph Thornton). Important authors represented include Algernon Blackwood, Oliver Onions, Guy Endore, Robert E. Howard, and Robert Bloch.

It's been some time since I've read the collected paperback stories of Jules de Grandin by Seabury Quinn; I had



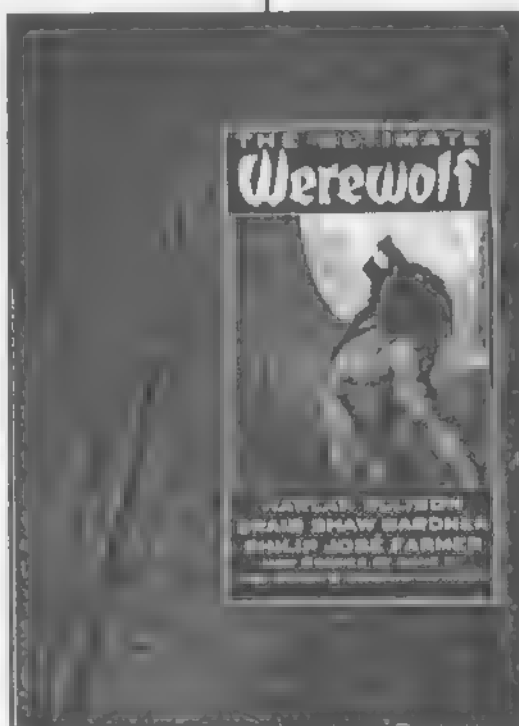
forgotten just how "purple of prose" his writing could be. In "Fortune's Fool," Ramon de Grandin, an ancestor of the little French occult detective, rescues a Turkish beauty from a castle inhabited entirely by werewolves, somehow finding the time to utter medieval oaths such as, "By the tresses of the Sainted Maid!", "Begone, avaunt, aroint thee!" and "Fie on ye for the cravens that ye be!"

In spite of an awkward title, James Farlow's "The Demythologised Werewolf" is perhaps the most interesting of these lesser-known works, offering an alternative scientific rationale for lycanthropy in place of Blish's. Two scientists, Dr. Daniel Mackerman, an environmental physiologist, and the narrator, Bill, an oncologist, meet at the former's isolated marine research facilities. On the premises, heavily sedated, is Victor Tormany, son of an Eastern European count. The researchers watch Tormany, hooked up to medical monitoring apparatus, undergo an astounding transformation:

The man's body was changing its shape. His height visibly decreased, his chest and limbs became much thicker; his surface musculature seemed to have better tone....His fingers and toes became massive, and grew impressive talons, those on the hands larger than those on the feet. The man's pale skin darkened and hair appeared and thickened to a continuous grey covering of fur. The shape of his face altered, the jaws became longer...

Mackerman invites Bill to become part of the investigating team and help determine the cause of Tormany's transmogrification. Just as the two begin to discuss oxygen consumption, thermoregulatory responses and basal metabolic rates, a power outage plunges the facility into darkness. Without the sedative drip, Tormany breaks free of his bonds and, in lupine form, wreaks havoc across the compound. The werewolf eventually succumbs to the sharks in the compound's salt-water pond, but only after biting and breaking Bill's arm. Luckily, the causative agent for lycanthropy is contagious—Bill, now a werewolf himself, guarantees the researchers will continue to receive lucrative grant monies.

To lay claim to having achieved "the ultimate" in any endeavor is a risky proposition at best. Byron Preiss and his associate editors would have been far



wiser to title their 1991 *The Ultimate Werewolf*, rather, *The So-So or Mediocre Werewolf*. In spite of a stellar line-up of talent, the quality of the reprinted material in this collection only serves to point up the paucity of the original selections. Far too many rely on EC-comic-style "gotcha!" endings—or simply go nowhere at all.

Again, reprinted stories by Harlan Ellison ("Adrift Just Off the Islets of Langerhans..."), Larry Niven ("There's a Wolf in My Time Machine"), and Robert Silverberg ("The Werewolf Gambit") fare the best in this collection. Ellison's "Adrift" is one of his finest creations. Although now invincible, Lawrence Talbot, the original Wolfman, craves death, the only possible end for his tortured existence. He enlists his European friend Victor, fundamental particle researcher, in the search for his soul

—ostensibly so that he can wipe himself out. Talbot embarks on an eerie, surrealistic odyssey through his own body. In an ending that's only a hair's-breadth away from being maudlin, Talbot makes peace with himself and gives a second chance to two other tortured lives—all of this in a story without one full moon or transformation scene.

In the middle of the otherwise routine "Wolf, Iron, and Moth," Philip Jose Farmer, aware that there's pretty much a periodical for every imaginable demographic group, has his Dr. Varglik open a recent mailing:

...He pulled out WAW, a very limited-distribution publication. How had the editors of the Werewolf Association of the World known about him?...The magazine, though in English, was published and mailed from Helsinki,

Finland. A small section was devoted to articles about the problems of Asiatic weretigers... One article [was about] the extinction of the Japanese werefoxes...Another writer, under the obviously false byline of Lon Chaney III, gave the results of his survey-by-mail of werewolf sex habits...When in their human phase, they preferred that the female be on all fours and that the male use the rear approach. They also tended to howl and yelp a lot. This had led to trauma in 26.8 percent of the nonlycanthrope partners.

My favorite original is Pat Murphy's "South of Oregon City." In this leisurely-paced, wonderfully understated story set in the 1850's Northwest Territory, half-Cayuse Indian Jem Lowell meets full-blooded Nadya. Taken by her attractiveness and independent streak, he invites



her to be his wife on his homestead. Over time, he realizes that her periodic disappearances do not involve marital dissatisfaction, but a more fundamental difference.

"Where my father came from, they tell of people who become wolves," Nadya admits to Jem. "They don't need skins. At certain times of the moon, the wolf comes to them and they become the wolf. It's not something they choose. It comes, whether they will have it or not." (Echoes of Arthur Tofte's Scandanavian Audmund!)

When Jem discovers that Nadya, in her wild state, is also the mate of a "big white dog wolf," he must wrestle with jealousy and his vanity. He longs to be her sole companion, but he realizes that to force her to choose would be to drive her away. When he learns she is pregnant, his trust is put to the ultimate test. The story's end is refreshingly upbeat without descending into sentimentality.

Make sure to track down the first Pronzini and Haining volumes for your collection—but check out and read the Preiss from the local library.

6. Night Visions

In the 1980s and early '90s, specialty publisher Dark Harvest released nine volumes of *Night Visions*. In each edition, three well-established authors were each given a roughly 30,000 word span in which they could pen whatever they desired, without editorial or thematic constraint. As aficionados of dark fantasy, we are especially fortunate that both George R. R. Martin and Ray Garton each chose to write only one long novella in their allotted space. Both pieces center on lycanthropy but approach that theme from vastly different directions. I suggest that Martin's award-winning "The Skin Game" and Garton's "Monsters" represent the high points in the entire *Night Visions* series.

In "The Skin Game" (*Night Visions 5*, 1988), Martin

blends elements from *noir* detective fiction and police procedurals to create a truly "hair-raising" mystery (yes, I meant to say that). Randi Wade and Willie Flambeaux each have their problems—Randi, a P.I., is still trying to get over the unsolved murder of her police chief father, while Willie is a Primateen-toting asthmatic. Although they have been friends for many years, Willie has never confided to Randi that he is also a werewolf...That is, until the mutilated corpses of former

lycanthropes start turning up around town. "Skin Game" incorporates folklore, demonology, 'tec work, and corrosive family secrets in a gritty novel-la leavened by Martin's sardonic dialogue. If any of the pieces in our survey demand feature-film treatment, it's this one.

Ray Garton's "Monsters" (*Night Visions 6*, 1988) touches on so many issues dividing our society it is almost impossible to enumerate them all. While relating the story of writer Roger Carlton's return to his hometown—from which he had been virtually hounded years before—Garton manages to bring up religious intolerance, societal pressure, homophobia, the danger of repressing one's emotions, and AIDS awareness—among others. Roger seeks to make peace with the prejudicial specters of his past, but comes to realize the validity of "Wolfe's Tenet": "You can't go

home again." Old fears and biases impinge on him, creating the literal manifestation of the "monster" his Seventh-Day Adventist peers perceive him to be. Powerful—almost dangerous—stuff.

Be sure to look for these novellas, either in the original hardcover anthologies or the generally more accessible paperback editions from Berkley, *The Skin Trade* (1990) and *The Bone Yard* (1991).



7. New Moon

This past summer Carroll and Graf released the latest in their series of "classic monster" anthologies, *The Mammoth Book Of Werewolves*, edited by Stephen Jones. Falling just short of 500 pages, MBOW offers both original and reprinted material. The drawback to this (and any other 'theme' anthology) is perhaps a 'surfeit of fright' (it is possible to have too much of a scary thing). Simply put, with a title like Jones's (or Pronzini's or Preiss's before his), there is little opportunity for surprise: if someone is victimized, or dies, or hears a strange sound at night, it's pretty much *got* to be a werewolf now, doesn't it? I've found the best solution is to read another story (or even another book) between thematically-related tales.

The stand-out selection here is David Case's elusive novella *The Cell*. This story, with its shattering portrayal of dementia and paranoia, stays with the reader long after the final 'twist' (which isn't even really necessary). A nameless protagonist suffers from lycanthropy—or, at least *believes* this to be the case. He manages to convince his wife of the danger he presents to both their family and the community, and they construct a padded cell in their basement. During each month's full moon, the narrator has his wife lock him in the cell so that he may undergo his transformation without harming anyone. So far, so-so...but Case's artistry is evident in his use of the 'unreliable narrator.' The reader's convictions are constantly undercut: on one page it is obvious the protagonist is a raving lunatic (in the old-fashioned sense of the word); while on the next are dropped just enough hints to suggest maybe he's not so mad after all...

In a new selection, Roberta Lannes's "Essence of the Beast," a quartet of shape-shifters hire, toy with, grow close to, and ultimately feast on a sympathetic handyman. In an intriguing twist, none are any longer truly male or female—they are simply *carnivores*. And in "Out of the Night..." Kim Newman manages to weave together police corruption, revolution of the oppressed, and the legend of Zorro in an SF/horror hybrid. Some of the futuristic "tech-no-talk" doesn't ring true, but the reader has to admire the story's intricate set-up.

This fall's *When Will You Rage* (White Wolf, 1994), edited by Stewart Wieck, presents short stories set in the "World of Darkness" role playing game universe. Central characters belong to various tribes of the Garou, shape-shifters dedicated to preserving the spirit of Gaia in mankind's waning centuries. Hostile industrialists, renegade bands, and incipient insanity threaten the tribes' existence.

Just like their tormented protagonists, werewolf stories continue to go through changes. Until very recently, the shape-shifter invariably had to be seen as evil, or at least destructive...perhaps pitiable, while in human form, yet still a creature to shun and avoid.

New writers bring fresh perspectives to old forms, refashioning the lycanthrope as a more 'primal' version of man or a protector of a threatened eco-system (i.e., Cheri

Scotch; White Wolf's Garous). Whereas earlier writers couched their narratives in the form of mysteries ("All right, one of us *must* be a werewolf—hold out your hands so we can check the lengths of your fingers"), contemporary authors relish the challenge of assuming the shape-shifter's perspective—at least vicariously allowing themselves and their readers the ultimate "back-to-nature" trip.

As long as men and women respond, emotionally and spiritually, to the waxing of the moon—and despite what scientists say, you *know* you feel it when the moon is full and pendulant in the night-time sky—readers will return to the tales of those who crouch on all fours and race by the wan, pale light.



Scream Marriage

If you were asked to name some of the finest stylists in the field of horror fiction today, the name of Tem is bound to come up. Why the name shows up depends entirely on which Tem you're talking about.

If you're talking about Steve Rasnic Tem, you're referring to the creator of one of the greatest bodies of short fiction in the genre's history. Only a handful of writers can claim the stylistic consistency of Steve Tem...and an even smaller number can claim to have made their name solely on their short stories. With the exception of *Excavation*, Steve has never assayed the long form. But from "City Fishing" to "Firestorm," from "Bite" to "The Child Killer," Steve Rasnic Tem has been able to utilize language to the fullest in exploring the breakdown of human relations.

If you're talking about Melanie Tem, you're referring to a highly intimate, multi-layered style that's blossomed in a series of novels starting with the Stoker award-winning *Prodigal*. Melanie's talent for characterization has breathed life into a gallery of characters both in her short fiction and longer works. These days, between her own works (the most recent being *Revenant*) and her re-workings of classic horror motifs in collaboration with Nancy Holder (the first was *Making Love*; a second, *Witch Light*, is forthcoming), Melanie Tem is easily one of the most prolific and interesting writers in the Dell Abyss stable.

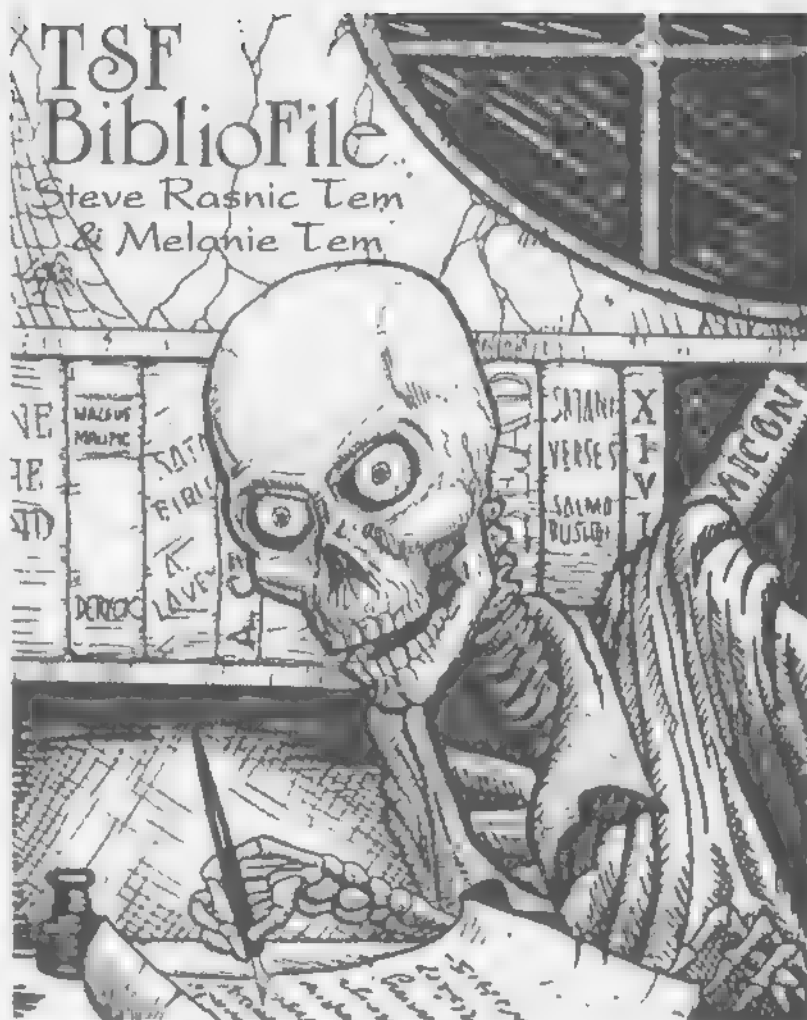
This three-way conversation was conducted by phone on a sweltering evening in May. In it, the Tems talk about each other's talent, the position of traditional symbols in horror fiction today and—considering the theme of this issue—werewolves.



TSF: How does the fact that you're both established writers color your lifestyle?

Steve: Oh, probably the same way it affects any couple that does business at home, in that we're here all the time. So the kids are used to having us home all the time, and the both of us were able to go to school conferences, that sort of thing. A lot of our extracurricular activities have to do with writing and writers—there's a fairly active horror writers' community which revolves around the Little Book Shoppe of Horrors—so the kids are used to having writers around. Writing is one of those occupations which requires a good deal of your attention. It's not like we're taking our work home—our work is home, all the time. We talk about writing because it's an enormous part of our lives.

TSF: Do you have a system that gives you the room to



interview by Tom Deja
checklist courtesy of Steve & Melanie

work independently of each other?

Melanie: Our offices are in different parts of the house, so that helps. We do tend to have naturally different schedules, which is nice.

Steve: Melly tends to start quite early in the morning. It used to be four in the morning, now it's what?

Melanie: Five.

Steve: I tend to work more in the evenings. Right now my schedule's been shifting around, but I used to work mostly in the evening.

TSF: I was wondering if you could evaluate each other as writers.

(Hilarity inexplicably ensues)

Melanie: Well, I always thought Steve was a better writer than I am. I think he has a really wide-ranging and detailed imagination. I think he is able to use the language in ways that most people would never risk using and I like

that alot.

Steve: Uh, gee.

Melanie: Top that one.

Steve: I think word for word, Melly's a better writer. Basically, she's a cleaner writer. I still have problems sometimes with structure or fuzziness, especially if I start writing too quickly. The words sometimes come out a little muddy, so I have to change it in revision; I think I spend more time on it than she does. Her style comes a little more naturally to her. I think she also writes more fully about an overall domestic situation. I think her characters fit in the family context. Mine generally do, too. But mine usually are reduced to one parent and one child, that interests me more. But generally speaking, she has more universality in her work.

TSF: Tell us a bit about your first sales.

Melanie: Well, I had published in literary and college magazine about twenty years ago, and I've probably published half a dozen stories in non-paying markets like that, having done the obligatory high school and college literary magazine route. I guess my first professional sale was a collaboration with Steve in *Asimov's*, which was called "Nasthesis."

Steve: I had published a number of poems in various literary magazines, a number of prose poems, a short story here and there. My first genre sale was to Ramsey Campbell's *New Terrors*.

TSF: "City Fishing."

Steve: I was Steve Rasnic at that time, in fact. It was shortly after Melly and I met, because I remember one time working on the story while she was at my place. I sold two or three quickly after that.

TSF: Your academic backgrounds bring up something I wanted to discuss. I know Steve has a degree in Creative writing, and I was wondering what you feel is the worth of getting a degree in writing, or can a person be successful just by practicing?

Steve: It depends. I think, early on, that most writers need exposure to some sort of workshoping so at least they have some sense of where they are, some place where a pallet of people are reading their stuff. Where at least, if eight or nine people are reading your manuscript and they all say something similar, it should have some sort of weight to it. Other than that, it all depends upon the teacher. If you have a really good teacher, he can move you along much more quickly than you could probably do yourself in terms of improvement. I don't think they can put talent into a person where there's no talent. I think also that it's probably even more important if you wanted to be a poet or a playwright to study,

because the body of theory—the techniques and the way to use those techniques—is much less accessible in playwriting and poetry than it is in fiction. So sometimes it's even more important to find a mentor who can guide you through.

At the same time, I think workshoping can be a mutual support group for no one to ever do anything. I think you have to be careful; you have to listen to your own voice.

TSF: And because of the solitary nature of the act of writing, it's assuring to have others around you from time to time to discuss your work.

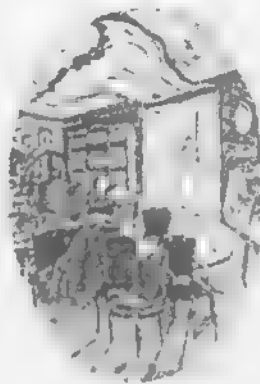
Steve: Oh yeah. That does help.

Melanie: I think that, for me, the important thing was to be in a workshop and have people who took the act of writing seriously. My degree's not in writing, and I think there are a lot of ways to do it. I have no objections at all to formal writing programs. However, I think most writers have not gone through a formal educational program having to do with writing, in which case I do think most people need some sort of community of writers at some point unless you're Thomas Pynchon or Cormac McCarthy. Cormac McCarthy lived in a barn, and he wouldn't accept two thousand dollar lecture fees because he said everything he needed to say in his books, thank you very much. So he and his wife lived without indoor plumbing for ten years. There are a few eccentrics like that who don't seem to follow the normal social rules, but most people probably need—if not actual critiquing of manuscripts, at least some sense that there are people who are engaged in the act of writing and are not just talking about it.

TSF: Melanie' you've collaborated both with Steve and also with Nancy Holder. I was wondering how the collaborative process works between the two of you, and Melanie, how does collaborating with Steve differ from collaborating with Nancy?

Steve: The collaborative process depends partially on who comes up with the original idea. We've done it different ways. Sometimes I've written a draft of the story, and felt like it didn't work, in part because it needed another character I couldn't write or something that I felt Melly could provide, so I'd give it to her and she'd rewrite the whole thing. then we'd go back and forth, and it would end up being a different piece of work from what I had started on. On other things, which we knew right away we were gonna collaborate on, one of us might write three, four, five pages and give it to the other person to rewrite and add some more to it. Then we'd work back and forth until we're finished. One novel we put together that hasn't been published yet, a fantasy novel, we basically chose different characters to focus on and alternated chapters.

ABSENCES



charlie goode's ghosts

So, what helps us is that we have very similar ideas about what's good and what's bad, very similar ideas about good and bad style, and I think we blend together fairly easily. I think it helps that we write in similar ways; the content may be different, but the way we approach things is, in many ways, similar.

Melanie: As far as collaborating with Nancy is concerned, it's logistically considerably more complicated because she lives in San Diego and uses a Macintosh, where I have an IBM. So the collaborative process on our first book, *Making Love*, while we think it was ultimately very successful, the book itself is written in a voice that neither of us would have written by ourselves. The actual process of it was very complicated. Because I'm only marginally computer literate, we had stacks of discs and stacks of hard copy and I got very confused as to where we were and which was the current draft and who had written what. We tried on the second book—which we're working on now—*Witch Light*, to do it a different way; one of us wrote the entire first draft and the plan was the other one would rewrite. It's not working, so we're going back to fifty pages and then fifty pages back and forth. Having decided that, we can work out the logistics in order to come up with that third voice, that new thing.

TSF: Speaking of *Making Love*, how did you translate the Frankenstein mythos into the pseudo-lifeforms created by Susan and Cameron in the novel?

Melanie: Well, I don't know if I can answer that question. I can talk about the genesis of the book and what we hope will be a series. We were at a convention two years ago having breakfast, Nancy and I, and came up with the idea of what we think of as—no one else uses the term—'The Demon Lover' series. The idea is that romantic/sexual relationships can be illuminated using traditional horror motifs. So we intend to write stories based on Frankenstein, werewolves, witches, zombies, vampires, succubus, using the traditional horror icons or archetypes to talk about modern-day romantic love and sexual relationship. And so the Frankenstein idea was the idea of creating one's own beloved out of imagination. Does that answer what you were asking?

TSF: It seems to. Something you just said reminded me of something Steve said in an interview back in 1987. You said that horror symbols made exploring our personal fears safer. Nowadays, the horror genre seems to be moving away from the traditional figures; do you feel there still is a place for the traditional iconography?

Steve: You mean a place for werewolves and vampires?

TSF: Yeah.



Steve: I think so. They're fairly powerful, romanticized figures and they've always been here. They were here before the movies, they were here in one form or another in folklore. So I think they're very powerful. In a sense they make it safer and more possible...I may not use the word safer any more, I might say it makes it more possible to think about things that otherwise would be rather elusive and non-concrete. I think they provide us with a way to get a handle on certain things.

TSF: You were working on a story cycle a few years back dealing with the iconography called *The Deadfall Hotel*. What's the status of that project?

Steve: Yeah. That was a novel that was structured as a series of related stories. I'm still working on it. It'll be done eventually. The werewolf story was actually published in *Shadows 9*, at least the first version of it, and (the novel) involves a vampire story, a zombie story,

a Thing Without a Name, a transformed beast/nature sort of story, a cult story, and a ghost story which is part of the frame of the piece. I'm trying to say in a final way, but not really in a final way, what I think about all those figures. I won't promise that I won't write about them afterwards, but perhaps I shouldn't after I finish this book. I don't know.

TSF: How did you two react to Melanie's nomination and eventually winning of the Stoker Award for *Prodigal*?

Melanie: I found out because I got a phone call—

Steve: You found out you *won* because you got a phone call.

Melanie: Nomination—oh. I don't remember. I think I said 'Really?' I remember how I reacted when I won, but I don't remember how I reacted when I was nominated. Do you, Steve?

Steve: You said, 'Oh' this is neat.'

Melanie: I didn't take it very seriously, I guess.

TSF: How did you develop the character of Lucy in that novel? She's very well drawn.

Melanie: I have a daughter that age. I listened. That's why the book's dedicated to her, because I had paid a lot of attention to things that were of interest to her and how she'd see things and how she spoke. Many of the details (of Lucy) are directly from her or her friends. She's now almost nineteen.

Steve: Lucy's not exactly like her, but certainly there are things addressed in there that concern her—

Melanie: Well, it's not about her, it's about Lucy. But things like the poster of Mohamar Quaddafi on her wall, which just embarrasses her to death now. She used to think that he was cute when she was twelve.

TSF: Well, that brings up something I'm curious about. I know how personal some of your work is, and I wonder if there's a line you won't cross in terms of putting yourself into your stories.

Melanie: I don't think my work is any more personal than most other people's. I've written very little that's autobiographical. The themes come from not so much my own life but more often come from trying to understand something about someone else's life. No one in *Wilding* is anyone in my own personal life. Julian is based on someone I know and care about, but he's a friend; he's not a close friend. So I don't know if I agree that my work is personal in the sense of being confessional or autobiographical.

Steve: People point to our work sometimes as being personal, and I know people point to somebody like Charlie Grant and refer to his work as something personal. I think partially it's because we view characters in a certain kind of way. Characterization for us comes first; and for Charlie I think it comes first in a lot of ways. There are other writers in the field who think like this, but in some ways I think it's a minority approach. Too often in horror fiction the idea of the plot comes first and then they kind of plug characters in later to fit it. So a lot of horror fiction comes off as more distant and impersonal. I think perhaps sometimes we don't tell our story, we're so interested in character. It's the same with Ramsey Campbell, I think, who's much more interested in character than gimmicks, I suppose.

Melanie: I would agree that our work is personal if by that you mean the opposite of impersonal. I would not agree that our work is personal if you mean specific to us.

Steve: Well, some writers are more interested in the close domestic situation, are interested in parenting kids, interested in families...

Melanie: Fear of intimacy.

Steve: Yeah, and those concerns of the family make the work seem more personal. Other writers are more interested in all kinds of political and social kind of things. That frankly doesn't interest me; sometimes it interests me but sometimes not. So I think that's the difference.

TSF: Steve? I wanna ask you about a pair of chapbooks you put out two years ago—*Fairy Tales* and *Celestial Inventory*. The thing that struck me about both of these items was the style in which you chose to present the stories. When you sit down and write a story like those two, does the method come to you as part of the initial conception?

Steve: Well, I've always been interested in the process of writing, finding new ways to write. I guess for the last five years or so, the [stories] I find to be the most fun and rewarding are the ones that are improvisational. I'll come up with a couple of images or lines and throw them together to see what generates from there. I have no idea

where I'm going, and I just know that some of those pieces get in the way and some of those pieces work. With both *Celestial Inventory*—especially with *Celestial Inventory*—and *Fairy Tales*, I decided to come up with a structure that would allow me to do that as much as I wanted. So I basically had a general idea in the beginning about who the character was that I was writing about and geared my improvisation to reveal something about that character's personality, what that character's terrors were or whatever. So I was using them to characterize the character, but they were a number of mini-stories that characterized the character. In part, that's the way I see all fantastic writing. Taking a clue from Kafka—the critics used to accuse his characters of being cardboard, and the reason they seemed cardboard was because [the critics] were looking for characterization in the wrong place. What Kafka understood, and what all fantastic writers either consciously or unconsciously understand is that the event that happens to a character characterizes that character in a way that it would not characterize somebody else. It's a very kind of Faust-istic view of fiction, but to me that's the way fantastic imagery works and I guess those were somewhat cases where I was trying to do different stories to characterize the person.

TSF: Does the fact that the horror genre doesn't have a ready rallying point such as *Ellery Queen* or *F&SF* to be its standard bearer every month hurt the genre?

Steve: It's always been something we've needed desperately. I don't think we've ever had one—*F&SF* off and on is the closest thing; *Twilight Zone* never quite made it that way. I think it would help the genre, yeah. It would be a monthly place for people to find a lot of different kinds of writing. Hopefully it won't confine itself solely to horror fiction; expanding to include poetry, I think, would be useful. I'm quite unhappy with horror packaging; I always have been.

TSF: All those skulls, God help us.

Steve: All those skulls and cover copy. Basically, in every way it's marketed, there's no sane or logical thing about it. People complain in small ways about it, and I think it's

near disastrous. I think it has changed the way writers who are interested in the field have written. It's changed the way people perceive the writing, and it's probably hurt us in every conceivable way except financially.

TSF: Which allows me to gracefully ease into the Abyss question. How did you get hooked up with the line, Melanie? Do you feel its 'hairstyles and attitude' reputation has hindered you?

Melanie: What does that mean?

Steve: You mean like punkish?

TSF: Not so much punkish as championing style over substance.

Melanie: I've never heard it referred to as



that. It's sort of interesting. Well, I don't feel hindered by that. I don't care. I try very hard not to pay any attention to anything like that, and since I'm not on Genie or any kind of computer network, I let Steve sort out all the news that's fit to hear. I don't mean that to sound smug; I just don't have a head for thinking about trends.

As for *Prodigal*, what happened basically was my agent was aware of things in publishing that I wasn't. He knew that when we had a change of editors—because *Prodigal* had made the rounds and nobody wanted it before Jeanne bought it—we would have people who could look at manuscripts differently than others had. That's what happened.

TSF: Since this is appearing in the 'All-Werewolf' issue, we should touch upon *Wilding*. What appealed to me about that book was the fact that it was more than a horror novel. It was also a grand, generational saga.

Melanie: That's Steve's fault. Steve's my first reader, and I gave him the first draft, and he said, "This is all very nice but it doesn't go far enough." I tend to write intimate things and I'm not used to that sort of (grander scale). So, it was done, but it was a stretch to spread it out like that.

TSF: Did you do research to construct the genealogy?

Melanie: No, no. I did research into wolves in the Rocky Mountains, but I didn't do any research into genealogy.

TSF: And the other question—is there an inspiration for the houses that most of the book takes place in?

Melanie: Mm-hmm. Northwest Denver, where we live, does in fact have many blocks in which there are open spaces in the middle for carriages. Horses and carriages used them to turn around.

Steve: Now they're used as parking lots.

Melanie: And they are constructed with alleys coming in; you would never be able to build a wall in front of them. That always fascinated me, to have an open courtyard in the middle.

Steve: For some reason, some of them are privately owned.

Melanie: Which I didn't know when I wrote the book. And we live in a turn of the century Victorian house, and there is catty-corner from us what we refer to as a twin house. The neighborhood legend is the houses were built by sisters at the turn of the century in a sibling rivalry to see who could have the best house...and ours won. The woman who built our house won because she had an artificial hill made. So now our house sits upon it and we have a thirty-five degree south-facing slope on which nothing will grow, but Mathilda won the contest. That's the legend. I've been able to verify some of it; I don't know how much of it is true. So I just extrapolated from that.

TSF: I've been told we're publishing an original story to accompany this interview, and I'd like you two to walk us



through the creative process that created it.

Melanie: It's not done!

Steve: It's in progress.

Melanie: We were hoping you wouldn't ask us that.

Steve: Melly dropped four or five pages on my desk.

Melanie: Some time ago, I might add.

Steve: Basically I'm approaching it from—when I think of werewolves I think about hungers—

Melanie: And I think about transformation due to repressed emotion.

Steve: So it will be...the story will happen through the clash between those two kinds of things, because at the moment that's all I really to know. I'll start with her characters

at this point and work on the hunger theme. I'll work on the oral part of it and she'll work on the transformation part of it, and we'll see what happens.

Melanie: And it will get done.

Steve: With a collaboration we do on any of these themes, we usually have very different takes on them, so it's sometimes very interesting to see how our different takes on these figures work themselves out into one coherent story.

Melanie: And then we have had collaborations where one or the other of us at the end would say, "Eww, I don't know; I don't know if I like that story." And the other one says, "I think that's a great story!"

Steve: Recently we did a vampire story for Poppy Z. Brite's *Love in Vein*, an anthology from HarperCollins, and it basically started off that way. She and I had different ideas about what vampires are, so we wrote a story called, "The Marriage." It's about a vampire whose wife is one of his victims, and it was interesting the way these different takes on the vampire worked themselves out.

Melanie: We did a zombie story like that, too.

Steve: Yeah, a story called "The Zuevbies," which will be in *Xanadu Three*, edited by Jane Yolen, which is basically working out the zombie theme, although we didn't use the Romero zombie. We used the Haitian zombie—

TSF: The more traditional figure.

Steve: Yeah. It was interesting because I'd done two stories with Romero zombies, and the feel here was very different.

TSF: Is there any one piece you'd like to have stricken from your *oeuvre*?

Melanie: I don't think so.

Steve: God, of the things we've published...there's a couple of stories I've published in little magazines in the past that if I'd thought it over I might not have written, or may have not rushed to get them published. One thing that happened with me was that a lot of my learning how to write I did publicly. There are advantages and disadvantages to that. Some of the obscure stuff I've had published

had some interesting pieces in them, but as a whole they didn't work. Unfortunately, what usually happens is those are the kind of pieces that are picked up to be reprinted in Germany or places like that. My first collection of short stories just came out in France. It's a substantial collection, 24 stories, nice and big package with a black band on it (saying) "Kafka is not dead!" and it's all very flattering. But the editors over there picked the stories, and I was getting all these correspondence back from them where they were really enjoying themselves finding my most obscure thing. They dug up literary magazines I had appeared in years before—how they got over to France I don't know. But they came back with all these requests. Some of the stories...I'll just say that a couple of stories they picked out, I'm hoping they come off a lot better in translation. I was just surprised that they wanted a couple of them, but I thought, well, why not? I can't read French.

TSF: We're now up to the plug section of the interview. What's in the hopper?

Melanie: My latest novel is *Revenant*. It's out now from Headline in England in hardcover; it'll be out from Abyss in September. I'm under contract for two more books for Abyss, and the one I'm working on now is due in December and is called *Azmodus*. And Nancy and I are working on *Witch Light*.

TSF: Which archetype will you be interpreting?

Melanie: Witchcraft. *Witch Light* is about rural Mexico. The icon is witchcraft distinctive to the Southwestern United States—snakes and things and such. I now have a stuffed snake curled around my computer monitor. And I have...what stories do I have coming out, Steve? I can hardly remember.

Steve: Um, you have a collaboration coming out in *Love In Vein*, a collaboration coming in *Xanadu Three*—

Melanie: And a story in *Little Deaths*. Already out, isn't it?

Steve: No. It'll be out in England soon.

Melanie: Right. My story will not be in the American edition, but it will be in the English edition.

TSF: And why is that?

Melanie: Because instead of having 180,000 words, [the American edition] had only 100,000 words, and my story is a long novel. They had to cut it.

Steve: You just had a story in *Bog Women*.

Melanie: Which got a terrible review in *Publishers Weekly*.

Steve: But it's an anthology based on the 'Wild Woman' archetype.

TSF: A 'Woman Who Runs With Wolves' kind of thing.

Melanie: That's a reprint of a story that was in *Skin of the Soul*.

Steve: We also have another collaboration coming out in *Book of the Dead 4*.

TSF: I thought there were only three of those.

Steve: Well, there are only two right now, but number three and four are going to be published in England in hardcover. I don't think it's going to be published over here, although it will be distributed through specialty shops.

Melanie: Spector did three, and Skipp is doing four.

Steve: And we're in four.

Melanie: And I've got some stories out.

TSF: And, of course, the story that follows this interview.

Steve: I have things coming out in *Stalkers Three*, whatever that will be called. It won't be called *Stalkers Three*, but it's an anthology edited by Gorman. I'm working on a sequel for "Celestial Inventory" to be done as a chapbook, and on...

Melanie: And you're working on *Deadfall Hotel*.

Steve: And working on *Deadfall Hotel* still. I have a story that will be reprinted in Datlow's *Best Fantasy and Horror*, and [Jones and Campbell's] *Best New Horror* will have the collaboration we did in *Hottest Blood*.

TSF: Which brings up a project I remember reading about that you were working on in the late '80s that I haven't seen. I think it was set in the Appalachians and called *New Blood*.

Steve: *New Blood* is still in progress. There's about two hundred pages done, and it will get done, too. I'll get back to that one. It's another one of my—

Melanie: And there's a science fiction piece called *Ubo Ubo*.

TSF: Which is the other one I remember hearing about.

Steve: That also has a substantial amount done. One of these days all of them will come out at once.

TSF: Why haven't you published another novel since *Excavation*?

Steve: It may be in part because writing novels is a very different process, I find. One thing with short stories is I can come up with another idea in the middle of a short story and I can go ahead and write a piece of it, and both of them will basically get done. You can't do that with novels, I've discovered.

Melanie: You end up with five novels, each with two hundred pages done.

Steve: Yeah, what happens to me is I get interested in something else in the meantime, and I start it and I get a lot done, and so have lots of incomplete things. And when you've delayed them for years you have to go back—because you're thinking differently as a writer—and rework pieces. Eventually these things will happen. Probably about the same time—I also have a story in *The Last Dangerous Visions*, so when that comes out maybe the novels will come out.



Melanie: The other thing that's in the hopper for Steve is the Colorado anthology.

Steve: Yeah, I'm editing an anthology of Colorado writers called *High Fantastic* that Ocean View Press is publishing. It's going to be a rather large book, 108,000 words with lots of art and an essay by Ed Bryant—

Melanie: Maybe.

Steve: —on the history of science fiction and fantastic writing in Colorado. Original stories by Ed, myself, Dan Simmons has an original novella in it.

TSF: You don't see many of those these days.

Steve: No. A number of the newer Colorado writers will be in there, with [stories that are] basically science fiction and fantasy.

Melanie: And some reprints, ahem.

Steve: Yeah, some reprints by people like Melanie. Hopefully it'll be like other anthologies and give people a sense of the writing that goes on here.

TSF: I guess we're down to final words, something pithy to wrap the interview up.

Melanie: That's your job.

Steve: Buy Tem.

Melanie: That's good. Buy Tem.

Steve: Send our kids to college.



Melanie Tem Checklist

SHORT STORIES

"Aspen Graffiti" in *Women of Darkness*, Kathryn Ptacek, ed (TOR, 1988)

"Beautiful Strangers" (with Steve) (Roadkill Press Chapbook, 1992)

"The Better Half" in *Asimov's* (mid-Dec. 1989); reprinted in *The Mammoth Book of Vampires*, Stephen Jones ed. (Carroll & Graf, 1992)

"The Caretaker" in *Colorado State Review* (Fall 1979)

"Chameleon" in *Asimov's* (March 1988)

"The Changelings" in *Snow White, Blood Red*, Datlow & Windling, eds. (Morrow, 1993)

"Christmas with Jeremy" in *Dark Voices 3*, Sutton & Jones, eds. (Pan [UK], 1991)

"The Co-op" in *Women of Darkness II*, Kathryn Ptacek, ed. (TOR, 1990); reprinted in *Best New Horror 2*, Stephen Jones & Ramsey Campbell, eds. (Carroll & Graf, 1991)

"Cornfield" in *Cimarron Review* (Jan 1982)

"Daddy's Side" (Roadkill Press Chapbook, 1991)

"Fry Day" in *Final Shadows*, Charles Grant, ed., (Doubleday, 1991)

"Harry Gail Dying" in *Aspen Anthology* (Fall 1978)

"I Am A Lady" in *Black Maria*, vol. 4, #3 (1983)

"The Ice Downstream" in *Cold Shocks*, Tim Sullivan, editor (Avon, 1991)

"Jenny" in *Asimov's* (mid-Dec 1993)

"Kite" (with Steve) in *Starshore* (Fall 1990)

"Lightning Rod" in *Skin of the Soul*, Lisa Tuttle, ed. (The Women's Press [UK], 1990); reprinted in *Wild Women*, Sue Thomas ed. (1992)

"Making Love" in excerpt from the novel, (with Nancy Holder), *Gauntlet 5* (1993)

"Mama" in (with Steve) *Sisters of the Night*, Barbara Hambly, ed., (forthcoming)

"The Marriage" in (with Steve) *Love in Vein*, Poppy Brite, ed., (1994)

"Mask of the Hero" (with Steve) in *Chilled To the Bone*, Robert Garcia, ed. (Mayfair, 1991)

"Melisande's Ghosts" in *Skulduggery #4* (1980)

"Nvumbi" in (with Steve) *Xanadu 3*, Jane Yolen ed., (forthcoming)

"Pele" in *The Anthology of Fantasy & the Supernatural*, Sutton & Jones, eds. (1994)

"Phantom" in *Dark Voices 5*, Sutton & Jones, eds. (Pan [UK], 1993)

"Prosthesis" (with Steve) in *Asimov's* (June 1986)

"Rain Shadow" in *Women Of The West*, Kathryn Ptacek ed. (1990)

"Repentance" in *Grue 14* (Summer 1992)

"Resettling" (with Steve) in *Post Mortem*, Olson & Silva, eds. (St. Martins, 1989); reprinted in *Nursery Crimes*, Greenberg & Gorman, eds (1993)

"Reunion" in *Asimov's* (Nov, 1990)

"The Rock," *Little Deaths*, Ellen Datlow, ed., (forthcoming)

"Safe at Home" in (with Steve) *Hottest Blood*, Gelb & Garrett, eds. (Pocket, 1993)

"Secrets" in *Cemetery Dance* (Spring 1991)

"The Sing" (with Steve) in *SF International* (1987)

"Sitting with the Driver" in *Copper Star*, Bruce D. Arthurs, ed. (World Fantasy Convention, 1991)

"The Tenth Scholar" (with Steve) in *The Ultimate Dracula*, Byron Preiss, ed. (Dell, 1991); reprinted in *The Year's Best Fantasy & Horror*, Vol. 5, Datlow & Windling, eds. (St. Martins, 1992)

"This Icy Region My Heart Encircles" (with Steve) in *The Ultimate Frankenstein*, Byron Preiss, ed. (Dell, 1991)

"Trail of Crumbs" in *Asimov's* (November 1992)

NOVELS

Blood Moon (The Women's Press [UK], 1992)

Making Love (with Nancy Holder) (Dell/Abyss, 1993)

Prodigal (Dell/Abyss, 1991)

Revenant (Dell/Abyss, 1994)

Wilding (Dell/Abyss, 1992)

AWARDS

Icarus Award (British Fantasy Awards), 1991

Bram Stoker, Superior Achievement First Novel, 1992

Steve Rasnic Tem Checklist

Editor's Note: due to Steve's remarkable prolificity and our own impending deadlines, the following checklist contains more bibliographical "holes"

than is our wont

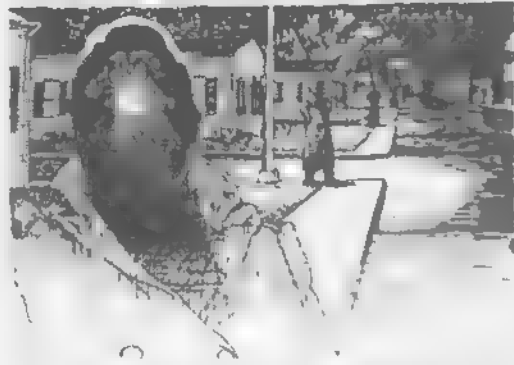
SHORT STORIES

- "Absences" in *Absences: Charlie Goode's Ghosts*, (Haunted Library [UK] chapbook, 1991)
- "Adleparmeun" in *Cold Shocks*, Tim Sullivan, ed. (Avon, 1991)
- "The Adoptions" in *Drabble II—Double Century*, (Becon [UK])
- "After the Night" in *After Hours* #25 (forthcoming)
- "Again, the Hit and Run" in *Chrysalis* 9, Roy Torgeson, ed. (Zebra, 1980)
- "Alan's Mother" in *The Twilight Zone*, (June, 1982)
- "Among the Old" in *Pulphouse* #1
- "Ancient Grass" in *After Hours* #7
- "Angel Combs" in *The Anthology of Fantasy & The Supernatural*,
- "Aquarium" in *The Seaharp Hotel*, Charles Grant, ed. (TOR, 1990)
- "Archetype" in *NonStop Magazine* #2 (forthcoming)
- "The Assassination" in *Center* 9, 1976
- "At the Bureau" in *Shadows* 3, Charles L. Grant, ed. (Doubleday, 1980), *100 Great Fantasy Short Shorts*
- "At the End of the Day" in *Dead End: City Limits*, Silva & Olson, eds. (St. Martins, 1991)
- "August Freeze" in *Weird Tales* 2
- "Back Windows" in *Gauntlet* #1
- "The Bad People" in *Fantasy Tales* #13; *The Best Horror From Fantasy Tales* (Carroll & Graf, 1988)
- "The Battering" in *Shadows* 8, Charles Grant, ed. (Doubleday, 1985)
- "Be Mine" in *14 Vicious Valentines*, Martin Greenberg, ed. (Avon, 1988)
- "Beautiful Strangers" (w/ Melanie) (Roadkill Press chapbook)
- "Bite" in *The Horror Show* (Fall 1986)
- "Black" in *After Hours* #3
- "Bloodwolf" in *Shadows* 9, Charles Grant, ed. (Doubleday, 1986)
- "Blue Alice" in *The Dedalus Book of Femmes Fatales*,
- "Bodies & Heads" in *The Book of the Dead*, John Skipp and Craig Spector, eds. (Ziesing, 1989)
- "Bouquet" in *Absences: Charlie Goode's Ghosts*, (Haunted Library [UK] chapbook, 1991)
- "Boxer" in *New Blood* (Fall 1988)
- "Boy Blue" in *Weird Tales* 2, Lin Carter ed. (Zebra, 1980)
- "Broomstick" in *The Ultimate Witch*, Byron Preiss, ed. (Dell, 1993)
- "Brutes" in *Iniquities* #3
- "Buzz" in *Mile High Futures*; Asimov's (Dec., 1986)
- "Carnal House" in *Hot Blood*, Jeff Gelb ed. (Pocket Books, 1988); *Best New Horror*, Jones & Campbell, eds. (Carroll & Graf, 1990)
- "Celestial Inventory" (Chris Drumm chapbook)
- "The Child Killer" in *Monsters In Our Midst*, Robert Bloch, ed. (TOR, 1993)

- "City Fishing" in *New Terrors* 1, Ramsey Campbell, ed. (Pan, 1980, Pocket, 1982)
- "Compulsion" in *Narrow Houses*, Peter Crowther, ed. (UK, 1992)
- "Cornwoman" in *Dragon* #145
- "Crutches" in *Shadows* 6, Charles Grant, ed. (Doubleday, 1983)
- "Cutlery" in *Absences: Charlie Goode's Ghosts*, (Haunted Library [UK] chapbook, 1991)
- "Daddy" in *Footsteps* #7
- "Daddy's An Actor" in *New Mystery* #1
- "Dancers In The Leaves" in *All Hallows* 2 (England)
- "Dark Shapes In The Road" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984; Berkley, 1988)
- "The Day It Rained Vaginas" in *Last Wave* #3
- "Decodings" in *Decoded Mirrors* (Necromicon chapbook, 1993)
- "The Deep Blue Sea" in *New Blood* (Winter, 1989)

Steve Rasnic Tem

DECODED MIRRORS



3 tales after lovecraft

- "Derelicts" in *The Dodd, Mead Gallery of Horror*, Charles Grant, ed. (Dodd, Mead, 1983)
- "Dinosaur" in *Asimov's* (May 1987); *Dinosaurs!*, Dann & Dozols, eds.
- "Does It Scare You?" in *Gorezone* #8
- "Doodles" in *Noctulpa: Sinistre* (1993)
- "The Doors of Hypertext" in *Infinite Loop*
- "Dune Shack" in *New Frontiers* 2, Pronzini & Greenberg, eds.
- "The Dying" in *Jabberwocky*
- "Early Warning" in *Owlflight* #2
- "Embrace of Clay, Embrace of Straw" in *Crypt of Cthulhu* #39
- "End of the Yarn" in *Weirdbook* #19
- "The Enormous Lover" in *Last Wave* #1
- "Escape On A Train" in *Pulphouse* #7
- "Facing It" in *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine*, (April 1984)
- "A Fairytale" in *Pigiron* #10
- "Fairytale" (Roadkill Press chapbook, 1990); *Pulphouse* #12
- "Family" in *Underground* (Dark Horse comics)

- "The Farmer" in *The Fontana Book of Great Horror Stories*, Mary Danby, ed. (Fontana)
- "Father's Day" in *Shadows* 5, Charles Grant, ed. (Doubleday, 1982)
- "Filmmaker" in *Chrysalis* 8, Roy Torgeson, ed. (Zebra, 1980)
- "Final Apprentice" in *Betcha Can't Read Just One*, Alan Dean Foster, ed.
- "Firestorm" in *Perpetual Light*, Alan Ryan, ed. (Warner, 1982)
- "First Rights" in *Space & Time* #65
- "Fogwell" in *Doom City*, Charles Grant, ed. (TOR, 1987)
- "Forward" in *Destinies*, Jim Baen ed. (Ace, 1980); *A Spade of Spacetime*, Fred Saberhagen, ed.
- "Frank at 26" in *Thin Air Wonder Stories*, 1979
- "The Garden' In Autumn" in *Deathrealm* (forthcoming)
- "The Giveaway" in *Shadows* 4, Charles Grant ed. (Doubleday, 1981); *100 Great Fantasy Short Shorts*
- "Going North" in *Northern Frights*, Don Hutchison, ed. (Mosaic, 1992)
- "Goode Farm" in *Absences: Charlie Goode's Ghosts*, (Haunted Library [UK] chapbook, 1991)

"Grim Monkeys" in *Tropical Chills*, Tim Sullivan, ed. (Avon, 1988)

"Guardian Angels" in *Decoded Mirrors* (Necromicon chapbook, 1993)

"Halloween Street" in *Halloween Street* (Wildside Press miniback, forthcoming)

"Harvest Child" in *Elsewhere III*, Terri Windling, ed., Ace Books; *Year's Best Fantasy*, Vol. 11 (DAW)

"Hearts" in *Absences: Charlie Goode's Ghosts*, (Haunted Library [UK] chapbook, 1991)

"Her New Parents" in *Weirdbook* #23/24

"Hldeout" in *Other Worlds* 1, Roy Torgeson, ed. (Zebra, 1980)

"Hidey Hole" in *Masques* 2, J.N. Williamson, ed. (MacLay, 1987)

"Hijacker" in *Eldritch Tales* #8,

"Hooks" in *Fear* #5

"Housewarming" in *The Fontana Book of Great Ghost Stories*, R. Chetwynd Hayes, ed. (Fontana)

"Hungry" in *Borderlands* 3, Tom Monteleone, ed. (Borderlands Press, 1993)

"The Hunt" in *Dead of Night* ???

"The Hunter" in *2001*, (India, ??)

"Ice House Pond" in *In The Fog*, Charles Grant, ed. (TOR, 1993)

"In A Guest House" in *Greystone Bay*, Charles Grant, ed. (TOR, 1985)

"In All Things Moderation" in *Fantasy Book* 2

"In Control" in *Tales As Like As Not*

"In The Trees" in *Fantasy Tales* #4

"Interlude in a Laboratory" in *Asimov's*, (Aug. 1981)

"Jesse" in *Psycho Paths* 1, Robert Bloch, ed. (TOR, 1991)

"Katherine's Shadow" in *Borderland* #4

"Kiss" in *Dark Horizons* (Journal of the British Fantasy Society) #24

"Kite" (with Melanie Tem) in *Starshore* #2

"L Is For Love" in *Footsteps* #8

"Labyrinthine" in *Computer Gaming World*, (Sep/Oct 1982)

"Last Dragon" in *Amazing Stories* (Sept. 1987)

"Leaks" in *Whispers* VI, Stuart Schiff, ed. (Doubleday, 1987)

"A Letter Written to Gabriel After His Death" in *Aspen Anthology*, 1979

"The Lie" in *2 AM* #7

"Lie Down With The Sun" in *Jimson Weed*, 1978

"Little Cruelties" in *Cutting Edge*, Dennis Etchison, ed. (Doubleday, 1986)

"The Little Dead Girl" in *Fantasy Macabre* #5

"Little Poucet" in *Snow White, Blood Red*, Datlow & Windling, eds. (1992)

"Long Haul" in *Mike Shayne's Mystery Magazine*, (March, 1983)

"Lost Cherokee" in *Tales of the Great Turtle* (forthcoming)

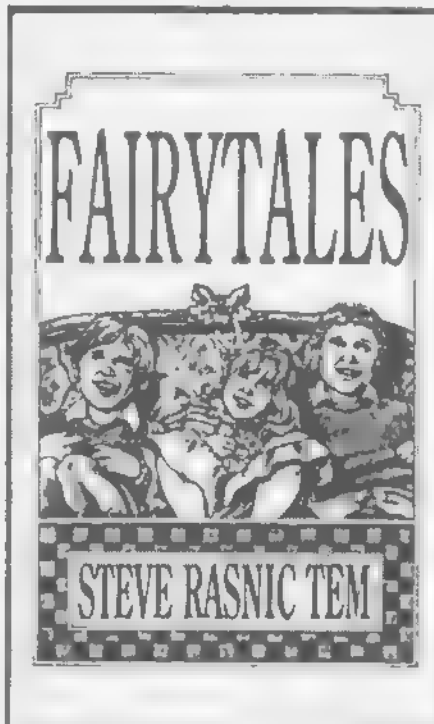
"Mama" (with Melanie) in *Sisters of the Night*, Barbara Hambly, ed. (forthcoming)

"The Man Who Made Plasticware" in *Gumbo*, 1978

"Markers" in *Cemetery Dance* #2

"The Marriage" (with Melanie) in *Love in Vein*, Brite & Greenberg, eds. (forthcoming)

"A Mask In My Sack" in *The Saint Magazine*



"Mask of the Hero" (w/ Melanie Tem) in *Chilled To The Bone*, Robert Garcia, ed. (Mayfair, 1991)

"Mechanic" in *Chrysalis* 10, Roy Torgeson, ed. (Zebra, 1980)

"The Men and Women of Rivendale" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984; Berkley, 1988); *Vampires*, Alan Ryan, ed. (Doubleday, 1987)

"Merry-Go-Round" in *New Pathways* #14

"The Messenger" in *Weird Tales* 3, Lin Carter, ed. (Zebra, 1981)

"Mirror Man" in *Decoded Mirrors* (Necromicon chapbook, 1993)

"Morning Talk" in *Horrors*, Charles Grant, ed. (Playboy Press, 1980)

"Mother Hag" in *Grue* #??; *Tales By Moonlight* 2, Jessica Salmonson, ed. (TOR, 1987)

"Motherson" in *Masques* 3, J.N. Williamson, ed. (St. Martins, 1989)

"Moths" in *Weirdbook* #17

"My Wife, With the Yellow Hair" in *2 AM* #15

"Night Cry" in *Eldritch Tales* #2

"Night, the Endless Snowfall" (Part 2 of A Trilogy for Sleep) in *Eldritch Tales* #7

"Nvumbi" in *Xanadu* 3, Jane Yolen, ed. (forthcoming)

"On a Path of Marigolds" in *Fantasy Book* (Nov. 1982)

"The Orchard" in *Asimov's*, (Aug. 1983)

"Out of Colorado" forthcoming in *High Fantastic*

"The Overcoat" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984; Berkley, 1988)

"The Owl With Human Eyes" in *Quarry* 30/3

"The Painters Are Coming Today" in *Other Worlds* 1, Roy Torgeson, ed. (Zebra, 1979); *100 Great Fantasy Short Shorts*

"Passing Through" in *Deathport*, Ramsey Campbell, ed. (Pocket, 1993)

"Pathetic Fallacy" in *Tomorrow* #5

"Piano Moon" in *The Horror Show* (Winter, 1985)

"Plainclothes" in *Cemetery Dance* #??

"Playing Dead" in *Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine*

"The Poor" in *Terrors*, Charles Grant, ed. (Playboy Press, 1982); *100 Great Fantasy Short Shorts*

"Preparations for the Game" in *Whispers*, Stuart Schiff, ed.; *Masters of Darkness*, Dennis Etchison, ed.

"The Process" in *Gauntlet* #3

"Prosthesis" (w/Melanie Tem) in *Asimov's* (June, 1986)

"Pulled Down to Sleep" (Part 1 of A Trilogy for Sleep) in *Eldritch Tales* #7

"Punishment" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984; Berkley, 1988)

"Rat Catcher" in *Dark At Heart*, Joe & Karen Lansdale, eds. (Dark Harvest, 1992)

"Re: Vision" in *Swashbuckling Editor Tales* (Wildside Press, forthcoming)

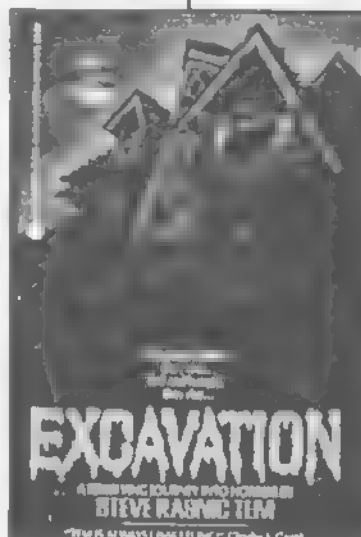
"Release of Flesh" *Hot Blood* 4 (Pocket, forthcoming)

"The Regulars" in *After Hours* #??

"The Reincarnation" in *Pigiron* #10

"Resettling" (w/ Melanie Tem) in *Postmortem*, Silva & Olson, eds. (St. Martins, ??)

"Rider" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984;



Berkley, 1988)

"The Rifleman, the Cancerous Cow, and the Swedish Memorial Hospital" in *Pigiron* #11

"Riverbanks" in *Grue* #??

"Robin in the Mists" in *The Fantastic Robin Hood*

"Safe At Home" (w/ Melanie) in *Hottest Blood*, Jeff Gelb, ed. (Pocket, 1993)

"Safe House" in *Winter Chills* #3

"Saleb" in *Juice*, 1977

"Save the Children!" in *Weird Tales* 4, Lin Carter, ed. (Zebra, 1983)

"The Secret Flesh" in *Pulphouse* #11

"The Snow People" in *Fantasy Macabre* #??

"Self-Possessed" in *The Horror Show* (Fall, 1986)

"Shadows in the Grass" in *The Fontana Book of Great Ghost Stories*, R. Chetwynd Hayes, ed. (Fontana)

"Sharp Edges" forthcoming in *Stalkers* 3 (book to be retitled), ??, eds.

"The Sing" (w/ Melanie Tem) in *SF International* #1

"Sirens" in *Weird Tales*

"The Sky Came Down to Earth" in *Tales by Moonlight*, Jessica Salmonson, ed. (Robert Garcia, 1982; TOR, 1985)

"Sleep" in *The Twilight Zone*, (March, 1982); 100 *Great Fantasy Short Short Stories*

"The Snow People" in *Fantasy Macabre* #??

"The Soul As Mickey Mouse" in *Jimson Weed*, 1978

"The Sound of Hawkings Dissolving" in *Chrysalis* 9, Roy Torgeson, ed. (Zebra, 1980)

"Spidertalk" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984; Berkley, 1988)

"Squeezer" in *New Crimes* 3

"Stone Head" in *Shadows* 5, Charles Grant, ed. (Doubleday, 1982)

"Stones" in *Constable New Crimes* 2

"Strands" in *Noctulpa* #4

"The Strangers" in *Scare Care*, Graham Masterton ed., (TOR, ??)

"Taking Down the Tree" in *Pulphouse* #??

"Teddy Bear Winter" in *Magic Realism*

"Ten Things I Know About the Wizard" in *Fantasy Book* (May, 1983)

"The Tenth Scholar" (w/ Melanie Tem) in *The Ultimate Dracula Book*, Byron Preiss, ed. (Dell, 1991)

"There's No Such Thing As Monsters" in *Fantasy & Terror* #3

"A Thin Silver Line" forthcoming in *The Last Dangerous Visions*, Harlan Ellison, ed.

"This Icy Region My Heart Encircles" (with Melanie Tem) in *The Ultimate Frankenstein Book*, Byron Preiss, ed. (Dell, 1991)

"The Three Billy Goats Gruff" in *Grue* #??

"Thrumm" in *In Dreams*

"Time and the Exile" forthcoming in *Concanadian Program Book*

"Tricks and Treats" in *Halloween Street* (Wildside Press miniback, forthcoming)

"Trickster" in *Halloween Horrors*, Alan Ryan ed. (Doubleday, 1986)

"12 Minutes of Darkness" (Chris Drumm chapbook)

"Umbrellas" in *Nocturne* #1

"The Unmasking" in *Phantoms*, Martin Greenberg, ed. (DAW, 1989)

"Vintage Domestic" in *The Mammoth Book of Vampire Stories*, Stephen Jones, ed. (Carroll & Graf, 1992)

"The Visible Man" in *New Pathways* #17

"Vulture" in *Further Adventures of the Penguin*,

"Wake" (Part 3 of A Trilogy for Sleep) in *Eldritch Tales* #??

"Wanderlust" in *Tales of the Wandering Jew*, Brian Stableford, ed. (Daedalus [UK], ??)

"War on the Downside" in *Extro* (Ireland, July 1982)

"When Coyote Takes Back the World" in *Lands of Never*, Maxim Jakubowski, ed. (Unicorn Books [UK])

"White Rose" in *Quarry* 30/3, SF issue (Canada)

"Woman On The Corner" in *Whispers* #23/24 (1987)

"The Woodcarver's Son" in *Offworld* #2

"The World Through The Tree" in *Mythellany*

"Worms" in *Night Visions* 1 (Dark Harvest, 1984; Berkley, 1988)

"Writing In The Dark" in *After Hours* #??

"You Dreamed It" in *The Saint Magazine* #2

Underground" in *Metahorror*, Dennis Etchison, ed. (Dell Abyss, 1992)

NOVEL

Excavation (Avon, 1987)

CHAPBOOKS/COLLECTIONS

Absences: Charlie Goode's Ghosts (Haunted Library, 1991)

Beautiful Strangers (with Melanie Tem, Roadkill Press)

Celestial Inventory (Chris Drumm, 1991)

Decoded Mirrors: 3 Tales After Lovecraft (Necronomicon Press, 1993)

Fairytales (Roadkill Press, 1990)

Halloween Street (miniback with 5 Halloween tales, including 2 originals; Wildside Press, forthcoming)

Ombres Sur La Route (24 story collection; Denoel [France],)

RECOGNITIONS

Finalist for the first annual Philip K. Dick Award (best original SF paperback of the year) for *The Umbral Anthology of Science Fiction Poetry*. 1983.

World Fantasy Award Nominee, 1983, for the short story "Firestorm"

British Fantasy Award Nominee, 1985, for the short story "Little Dead Girl"

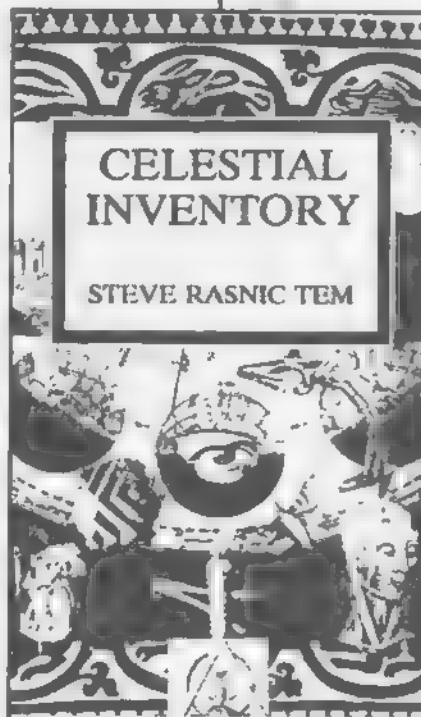
Several times finalist for the Rhysling Award (best science fiction poem of the year)

Winner of the 1986 Daedalus Award for work in Short Fiction, Horror

Winner of the British Fantasy Award, 1988, for Best Short Story for "Leaks"

Finalist for the Bram Stoker Award for First Novel, 1988, for *Excavation*

Finalist for the Bram Stoker Award for Short Story, 1990, for "Bodies & Heads"



MORE THAN SHOULD BE ASKED

original fiction by
Steve Rasnic Tem and Melanie Tem

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"Jake never was an easy child." George wondered how many times he and Evelyn—mostly Evelyn—had said that while their son was growing up. To friends in front of whom his always marginal table manners had become atrocious; to teachers he wouldn't mind and from whom he wouldn't admit he was learning; to each of the depressingly long succession of social workers and police officers and probation officers and lawyers who'd practically become part of the family. The phrase irritated and embarrassed George, and, anyway, seemed pitifully inadequate. But he'd never found a better way to explain their son, either: Jake never was an easy child.

In the first place, he'd been nearly a month late, taking on this world in his own good time. All along, he'd been so active in the womb—kicking, punching, tossing and turning, even (Evelyn swore) biting—that his mother's poor insides were bruised and torn from his occupation of them, and they never had fully healed. Evelyn had been in such hard labor for so long that George had been convinced the baby would kill her trying to get out, or trying to stay in; woozy, he'd had to leave the room, and from his self-imposed exile in the too-bright waiting room couldn't tell when his wife's screams gave way to the lusty yells of his newborn son.

Jake had been more than a demanding infant. He didn't whimper or cry; he roared. He howled. He raged. Nothing they could do for him was ever enough. Especially, he never got enough to eat, either breast milk or formula. Evelyn's nipples were so sore she'd wept when the baby reached for them, but she

never denied him. Often they were bloodied—George had never imagined such a thing possible. The baby never did sleep through the night. To this day, George knew, his son was up at all hours. Himself unable to sleep soundly after all those years of Jake racing down the stairs on all fours, Jake singing and yipping at the top of his lungs, Jake leaping out a window or climbing back in, George would often go out in the middle of the night and drive by the apartment building where Jake sometimes stayed with his girlfriend. The lights were always on. A form would pace past the window, motioning wildly with its arms as if talking to itself.

Now Jake was going to be a father himself. And George was bursting with desperate advice that he didn't dare offer his son. He went over the magic words in his head several times a week:

Being someone's parent is a transformative experience. The kind of love you are required to feel toward your children is so different from any other kind of love that there must be another word. There are no parallels, no rehearsals, no situations from which to transfer usable skills or attitudes. Loving your child is almost nothing like loving your spouse, your friend, your parent, or God.

I have never loved anyone the way I have loved you, my son.

Being someone's father is a metamorphic experience. From the instant you first imagine your child, you are afraid. Among the limitless characteristics of this world, it is and always has been a dangerous place. Parents, by definition, know this. Children, by their nature, dare not, else they would never grow up.

I have never been afraid the way I

have been afraid for you, my son.

Being someone's parent shifts the shape of what you know yourself to be. I have never been as angry with anyone else as I have been with you, my son.

But George couldn't say any of that. The best he could manage was a hopeful comment to his wife: "Maybe being a father will straighten him out. Sometimes it does, you know."

To which Evelyn replied, in an attempt at wry humor that sounded pathetic, "Maybe this child will give him as much trouble as he gave us. What's that old parental curse? 'May you have ten just like you, ten times worse.'"

When Jake was three, George found him carefully laying broken bottles in the road. When he was seven, their neighbor informed them he'd been beating chickens to death with rocks; the man was almost apologetic when he brought a struggling and utterly unchastened Jake to the door, and George couldn't tell if he was sorry he hadn't told them before or sorry he was telling them now.

When he was nine, he burned the house down. "Show me an arson fire in a house," one of the firefighters opined, almost jauntily, "and I'll show you a nine-year-old boy with a match." But this wasn't just a curious kid; Jake had deliberately built piles of old clothes and newspapers at strategic locations, doused them with gasoline he'd pilfered from the can in the shed, and set the fire. The house was completely destroyed.

By the time he was thirteen, Jake had discovered the short-lived but gratifying thrills of stealing cars and doing drugs. At fifteen he was declared incorrigible by the courts and institutionalized. Between chil-

dren's homes, reform schools, and jails, he hadn't lived at home since.

They never dared have another child because of Jake. This would be their first grandchild—the first, at least, that they'd been permitted to know about. They couldn't just stand by. They had to do their best to help.

George and Evelyn discussed it, and one day just before the baby was born George mustered his courage to say, "Children will bring up all kinds of unresolved issues for parents."

Jake stared at him for a long moment with his dark eyes. "Unresolved issues? Jesus, speak English, at least," he snarled, and lit another cigarette. Imagining the developing lungs of his grandchild corroding from secondhand smoke while he sat there helplessly and watched it happen, George felt outraged, silly, and obsolete.

"This child will change you," Evelyn promised, but Jake wasn't a father yet and he had no way to understand.

"Being a father is the toughest job you'll ever have," George insisted on telling him. He'd waited twenty years to deliver this speech, and damned if Jake of all people was going to stop him now. "You're expected to have the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon, not to mention a sense of humor that won't quit and the ability and willingness to make critical split-second decisions a dozen times a day. Plus, you have to give unconditional love for the rest of your life without expecting anything back. Certainly not gratitude. Being a parent is



more than should be asked of any human being. It changes you, son."

Jake dismissed him adroitly. "You guys *think* too much—that's your problem." He laughed and waved his hand and walked away.

The baby was born with an excess of body hair. George worried over that, found it hard to look at the child, until Evelyn read to him from one of her huge baby books that lanugo was perfectly normal, albeit unusual, and would disappear in a few days' or months' time. It was a reminder, the authors pointed out airily, of our evolutionary ancestry, our animal selves. George imagined the disdain Jake would express for "raising a baby with a book."

The baby was a fierce little thing. Fussy. Impossible to please. Ravenously hungry. Not, George thought with irony and grim satisfaction, an easy child. Sometimes when he held his grandson up to his chest, he'd find himself actually a little afraid, as if the baby might bite him. Not trying to hurt his grandfather, yet, but out of a natural, uncontrollable need. Then George would kiss the baby nervously and hand him back, making some joke about a grandparent's prerogative, and check himself for scratches.

One Sunday evening George and Evelyn stopped by the apartment on the pretext of taking an extra chicken that had been on sale 2-for-the-price-of-1 at Safeway. In truth, as their son almost certainly knew, they were there to monitor how the new parents were

doing with their grandson. They could hear Jake yelling and the baby screaming before they even got out of the car. Instantly George felt fury rising, and Evelyn's sharp intake of breath only made him angrier.

They looked at each other. Their worried gazes had met in just that way hundreds of times about Jake—helpless, enraged by their helplessness, furiously longing to do the right thing. George wished they could just drive off and come back later when this crisis was over, one way or another, and they could pretend they hadn't known about it and therefore bore no responsibility. But that wasn't so. Their son had been beyond their reach for years, but their grandson wasn't yet, and they had to do something.

One after the other, they made their way as fast as they could, on legs that weren't young any more and with lung capacities that proved to be alarmingly limited, up the unlit and musty-smelling steps to the apartment. Their footsteps clattered and echoed. The door at the top landing was ajar. George could see through the young couple's minuscule living room into the tiny alcove that served as a bedroom for all three of them. But Jake didn't seem to know or care that they were there, even when Evelyn said his name.

In the few seconds that passed while George caught his breath and took stock of the situation, he watched his son with his son in his hands. Not in his arms, for he held the baby well away from him, but in a two-handed grip such as you would use on a basketball. His hands seemed unnaturally large. He was roaring. The baby was roaring. They were having some kind of yelling match.

Evelyn said, "Jake!" again, but he didn't hear.

"Shut up!" he bellowed at the baby. "Shut the fuck up, you little bastard!" and he shook his son, too hard. Thinking of the soft infant brain skidding around inside the skull, George stepped forward.

Jake lifted the squirming and shrieking baby over his head. George was sure he was going to throw him. Both George and Evelyn reached for the child. Jake twisted away.

Now he had folded his son in against his chest. As if he loved him, which George believed he did. As if he owned him. As if he could do with him whatever he wanted. Even kill him if he wanted.

George couldn't let that happen.

Jake fixed his aging parents with a baleful glare, as if daring them to move, as if they were prey. The baby seemed to be staring at them, too. "We were just—" Jake started to say, then seemed to lose the words, threw back his head and howled with frenzied laughter. The baby howled, too.

George thought of a thousand things to say, and couldn't say any of them. He heard himself growl, heard Evelyn say, "George!" and then heard her succumb to speechlessness, too. With the intuition and unspoken communication that parents often develop when they've worked for years to present a united front, George and Evelyn sprang at once.

George's jaws closed on the back of his son's neck and snapped it. Evelyn's clawed nails went through his shirt and the skin and bone of his chest, into his heart. Evelyn's shoulder slammed into their son's ribs under his upraised arm, knocked him off his feet, and made him drop his son. George caught his grandson in his mouth.

Without words, George and Evelyn cleaned the baby of his father's blood with tongues that grew gradually shorter, made him as safe as any parents can make any child with hands whose nails shrank and whose palms grew softer, and learned again, for whatever it was worth, how to croon his name.



Book Review

Bestsellers Guaranteed

by Joe R. Lansdale

Ace, 1993; 207 pages; \$4.50

★★★ 1/2

Reviewed by Tom DeJa

WHAT'S THE DAMN dragon doing on the cover?

This is basically an expanded version of Lansdale's collection *Stories by Mama Lansdale's Youngest Boy* (one of the first *Author's Choice Monthlies*, if I recall), and it's a grouping of his odder tales. You know what I'm talking about—the shaggy dog stories he's so fond of telling, tales of haunted dentures, vampiric houses, and figures from classical children's literature on killing sprees.

A lot of these pieces are entertaining as hell, precisely because only Lansdale could get away with this kind of stuff. A story like "Bob the Dinosaur Goes to Disneyland" could only be pulled off by Lansdale because only Lansdale would think enough of it to actually *commit it to paper*. In this context, the more conventionally horridic stories like "God of the Razor" suffer because they're not as far out there.

All the stories, however, are relatively top-notch, and a few of them—the marvelously succinct "My Dead Dog, Bobby" and the vicious "Dog, Cat and Baby" (the flip-side of Dave Barry's 'Adventure Dog' column)—are textbook examples of the short-short. Sure, one or two of them are thin on plot, but those that are, like "The Events Concerning a Nude Foldout in a Harlequin Romance," are saved by spectacular characterization. This is a great collection of horrific, outré, bizarre stuff.

So why did Ace stick a goofy, glasses-wearing dragon atop a bunch of books on the cover? Why are they marketing this collection of horror stories as fantasy? If anybody knows what that idiotic dragon has to do with the demented material inside, let me know.



WEREWOLVES IN LEGEND AND LORE

articles
by
Basil
Copper
and
Robert
Dunbar

LYNDAL FERGUSON

like that of the terrifying vampire, the curse of the werewolf is an equally ancient myth, going back into the vastness of time. It was known in the days of the Greeks and Romans and has existed as a potent legend in almost all countries and all ages. Indeed, in most cultures where there was written language, there will the werewolf be found.

Unlike the vampire, which rose from the dead to prey upon the living, the werewolf/victim was not necessarily a person of evil life. Neither did he have to be bitten, like the prey of the vampire, in order to succumb. The curse of the werewolf, a sort of mania or disease, could descend without warning and turn men into ravening beasts.

And unlike almost every evil spirit of folklore, from the vampire, demon and witch, to the sorcerer and zombie, the werewolf alone had an element that was unique in his makeup; he was as much a victim as villain and he aroused compassion and pity even among those from whom he might find his victims.

Why was this so? What was it about the werewolf that made him unique? And just what is a werewolf, not only in legend but in clinical terms? In the compass of this necessarily brief article, we will endeavor to find out.



Lycanthropy, to give the condition its proper term, means literally wolf-man, being derived from the Greek *lukanthropia*. The dictionary defines it as "the transformation of a man into a wolf"; though learned men through the ages have argued as to whether it was actually possible for a human being to change his shape into that of a beast, there was no doubt among the primitive populations in mediaeval times, that this was an established fact.

More plausible was an actual medical condition which "made men melancholy" and turned them into ravening beasts; ancient records speak of men who were changed at the turn of the moon and gathered in graveyards, baying at the moon and causing havoc among the interred corpses.

The legend of the werewolf lies somewhere between the two extremes and there is no doubt that in the Middle Ages, when veritable plagues of werewolves were reported, the judiciary reacted in typical fashion; the result was a holocaust of denunciation with trials, hangings, mass-burnings and decapitations.

Once the wolf/man had shifted his shape he roamed the night, terrorizing and killing; he could only be destroyed by a silver bullet when in such shape but once he had resumed his human

In a vile attempt to curry favor with the gods, Lycanor—according to Virgil—sacrificed a child. His plan misfired. In retribution, an outraged Zeus transformed him into a ravening reflection of his true inner self—thus, perhaps the first lycanthrope. The story resurfaced in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with one crucial elaboration: anyone who *even unknowingly* ate the flesh of an animal sacrificed at Lycanor's altar would himself become a beast; and in the centuries that followed, this legend—in one version or another—found its way to every corner of the world. Only the method of affliction varied with locality. In rural Greece, eating a goat slain by a wolf transmitted the curse, while in the Balkan peninsula, drinking water from the footprint of a real wolf could promote infection. In other parts of Europe, merely sleeping in the open during a full moon sufficed...and innocence of spirit provided no immunity.

"It is believed as undoubted truth, that only the Almighty God can, when he pleases, change one into another," wrote Giraldus Cambrensis, Chaplain to Henry II; but the Dominicans Heinrich Kramer and James Springer in their infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* insisted that Satan could influence "the inner perceptions and effect changes in the actions and faculties." Robert Devoreaux, Earl of Essex echoed this theory of "Satanical delusion" in his *A Treatise Against Witchcraft*. Discussions as to their exact nature

notwithstanding, no one doubted the actual existence of what the *Demonologie* of James I referred to as "the men-woolfes." For centuries, the reality of the Black Arts remained unquestioned—witches rode wolves to sabbats where the Devil himself sometimes appeared in wolf guise. During

Middle Ages, people clung to the belief that evil individuals became werewolves through a pact with Satan, the process usually involving magical ointments and a ritual donning of the pelt of the specified animal.

Many things may have inspired the development of this belief. Certainly raids on peaceful settlements by Norse Berserkers had an influence. To a panic-stricken villager, the howling, fur clad invaders must have seemed all but indistinguishable from the scavenging wolfpacks that followed in their wake. But other factors may also have nurtured the myths. Wolves avoid human settlements...except when rabid. Imagine the terror a rabid wolf could inspire in a medieval community and the effect on superstitious minds when those bitten began to exhibit identically fierce behavior. Innocence provided no immunity.

European folklore has always acknowledged the existence of two types of lycanthrope—those who sought the shapeshifting ability, and innocents who suffered hideously from the affliction. Films and modern literature have dealt almost exclusively with the latter variety (even *Le Morte*

form he was subject, like all others, to the normal processes of mortality. In Europe in the olden times, when neighbor denounced neighbor, mass hysteria took over, something like the later Salem witch-hunts taking place.

But what were the symptoms of the werewolf? And how could the victim be infected? The latter question is somewhat difficult to answer; by the bite of another werewolf, certainly, but there is evidence from old records, that men metamorphosized their shapes for no reason at all. Hence its treatment as a disease in some more enlightened communities.

The victims would first feel ill; he would have a dryness of the chest and an unnatural thirst; a burning desire to divest himself of his clothing. His features would physically change; his complexion turn yellow; his eyes become bloodshot and enflamed. The hands and nails would become gnarled and claw-like; hair would grow on his hands, body and face and sometimes the sign of the pentagram, the dark, blurred, five-pointed star that was the mark of the beast, would appear on his chest.

Then the werewolf-victim would be powerless to act of his own volition until after the fit had left him; unless he were locked in, secure behind bolts and bars, he would roam the night, killing and savaging anyone who he came across. If unable to gain the

open air he would roll on the ground like a wild beast, biting and tearing in agony of mind and body until dawn released him from his frenzy.

The full moon was the worst time, so the tales ran and that was a period particularly feared; close relatives of a suspected lycanthrope would make sure their loved one was well secured at these periods and unable to run free in the night. Like the vampire, the werewolf had many names in different parts of the world; called wehr-wolf in England and Scotland, he became loup-garou in France; Werwolf in Germany; and volkodlak in Eastern Europe.

But the term meant only one thing, a beast-victim whom death alone could stop. Many were the safeguards devised against the werewolf; like the wolf himself he was said to have superhuman cunning. Often he would live unsuspected in the community, killing by night and returning to his house before dawn.

People with pointed eyes or long, claw-like hands were particularly at risk when the finger of suspicion pointed; one horrible manifestation of the witch-hunts, was the cutting into a suspect's skin which the inquisitors attempted to turn inside out, on the theory that the werewolf turned his skin, wearing it with the fur inside during the day. Thousands of innocents must have perished over the centuries in this bar-

D'Arthur mentions an unfortunate nobleman, "betrayed with his wyf for she made hym seven yere a werwolf", but it is the first sort—active rather than passive lycanthropes—who dominate most authentic superstition and nearly all case histories. And case histories abound, numbering a great many beyond the famed Gilles Garnier, Bougot/Verdun, Rollet, and Peyral cases mentioned in Basil Copper's accompanying article.

Throughout the Middle Ages, lycanthropes appear to have prowled the countryside, ravaging flocks and herds and committing acts of chilling savagery. Unlike the legends of witches and vampires, which mostly scapegoated women (legacy of the early Christian demonizing of goddess-oriented religions), the recurrent famines in central Europe brought forth a figure exuding a distinctly male musk, and the cannibalizing of children comprised the single most prevalent motif, figuring prominently in scores of trial records. The *Werwolf of Bordeaux* and the *Beast of Gerandor* slew dozens of young girls, as did the Bavarian *Devil's Hound*, while the *Wolfman of Prague* appears to have been a homicidal maniac with a predilection for teenage boys. Nor were these isolated aberrations. In medieval France alone, 30,000 lycanthropes were executed. Undoubtedly, in a world where the witchfinders constituted a self-sustaining industry (systematically confiscating the property of those who confessed under torture), thousands of cases must have been fabricated. But not all. Among the isolated huts and

primitive hamlets, something monstrous truly stalked...something of which the modern serial killer provides merely a pale shadow. In those dark days, society felt its very existence threatened and responded with equal ferocity.

Consider the case of Stubbe Peeter, a 16th century German who achieved great notoriety for his evil deeds. According to an English pamphlet [spelling modernized], Stubbe would "walk up and down, and if he could spy maid or child that his eyes liked and his heart lusted after, he would in the fields ravish them, and after in his wolfish likeness cruelly murder them." Only an arduous manhunt brought his twenty-year reign of terror to an end. On October 28, 1589, his trial concluded, and his sentence [translated from the High Dutch] condemned him "first to have his body laid on a wheel and with red-hot pincers to have the flesh pulled off from the bones; after that, his legs and arms to be broken with a wooden axe or hatchet; afterward to have his head struck off from his body; then to have his carcass burned to ashes." On Halloween, they carried out this terrible sentence, displaying his head on a pole in the center of the town of Bedbur—above the painted likeness of a wolf.

Lycanthropy trials reached their zenith in the 1600s before vanishing (almost) in successive tidal waves of cultural and scientific revolution. But a revival of lycanthropy, if only as a complex and potent symbolic structure, occurred

barous fashion.

The silver bullet has already been mentioned; similarly, a holy crucifix would burn the werewolf's skin if placed upon it. Others were condemned on circumstantial evidence, such as when a wolf was shot at by a member of a hunting party and a neighbor was later found to bear a bullet wound in a corresponding place. In these cases coincidence was ruled out and the party, guilty or otherwise, was summarily tried and condemned to the flames.

From such haunted regions have come the folklore and fairy tales of such seemingly-innocent narratives as *Puss in Boots* and *Beauty and the Beast*. All were founded on the grim fact of the werewolf-trials or such legends; and the dark background can even be glimpsed in today's watered-down and seemingly innocuous fairy tales such as *Little Red Riding Hood*.

But the werewolf was a very real phenomenon to mediaeval man and the sixteenth-century author of the famous *De La Demonomania des Sorciers*, Jean Bodin, who published his work in Paris in 1580 gave his opinion of lycanthropy unequivocally; he

maintained that the devil could change the shape of man into a beast, but that he could not alter his essential human nature.

Many painters, such as Goya, depicted scenes in which such monsters as werewolves were assuming their beast-shapes and many revolting concoctions were evolved by evil-minded people who really wished to change themselves into wolves. In one of the most famous werewolf trials, that of Michel Verdun and Pierre Bourgot at Poligny, France, in 1521, the accused confessed that they had changed into wolves' forms by shedding all their clothes and anointing their bodies with a special salve.

Common ingredients included soot, bat's blood, deadly nightshade and various types of oil, though modern scientific opinion, of course, states that none of the elaborate concoctions involved would have the slightest effect in changing shape when applied to the skin. Verdun, Bourgot and another confederate were executed after confessing to hideous crimes, in which they had torn to pieces and devoured portions of both young children and women.

The werewolf legend has some affinity with later tribal cults in which the devotees, to gain strength, assumed the skins of wolves and other beasts while carrying out their mur-

early in the Victorian era, this time reeking with a misogyny typical of the period. In such works as *The Female Animal*, the popular French writer Rachilde argued that women, possessed of imagination but no true intellect, had evolved into creatures of the night: literally identified with the moon and deeply perverse, they had become the absolute inversion of all things healthy and masculine. Bram Dijkstra, in the recent *Idols of Perversity, Symbols of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siecle Culture*, writes of the overwhelming distaste felt by men of the era for the "inherent" infirmities and "animal requirements" of their women; and this loathing apparently made the transition to the New World relatively intact (blurring the distinctions between werewolf and vampire). In the 1920s, William J. Robinson, chief of the Department of Genito-Urinary Diseases at The Bronx Hospital, sternly warned readers of his popular *Guide to Married Life and Happiness* about a "type of woman who is a great danger to the very life of her husband," referring to "the wife with an excessive sexuality...utterly without pity or consideration." Such women, it seems, had long been known by the scientific community to hunger for man's seminal essence, her lust for his fluids precipitated by an

insatiable need to replenish the blood incessantly lost to her reproductive cycles.

Apparently, the root of some fears grows very

deep indeed, and superstitions die hard...if at all.

Between the World Wars, authorities in Bourg-la-Reine, France failed in their efforts to assist farmers plagued by a marauding werewolf. In 1946, a Navajo shapeshifter terrorized a reservation in New Mexico, despite the intervention of local police. On December 17, 1976, *The London Daily Mail* heralded the apprehension of a serial killer with the headline WEREWOLF KILLER CAUGHT, and in the early 80s, another supposed lycanthrope panicked a British seaside resort, prompting publication of *Werewolf, A True Story of Demonic Possession* by a pair of "renowned psychic investigators" in collaboration with the recalcitrant "werewolf" himself.

"The old, savage lycanthropic beliefs have been relegated to our dream life," wrote psychologist Nandor Fodor. "Now transformation is used symbolically as self-denunciation for secret deeds, fantasies or desires." The world itself has changed profoundly—the domestic harnessing of elec-



derous activities. From such stemmed the dreaded Leopard Men of Africa, who were resurrected for purposes of murder during the Mau Mau emergency in Kenya.

Unlike the vampire the werewolf could not return to haunt the earth again after death. Almost alone among the dark creatures of myth and legend he was as much a victim as slayer and remorse played a big part in his make-up.

He really had only one thing to look forward to; merciful death. For there was no known cure for his condition; that was the most horrifying thing about it.

Let us now turn to some examples of the depictions of werewolves from ancient records. One of the most horrifying concerned a man called Gilles Garnier who was brought to trial in France in the sixteenth century for lycanthropic practices; he admitted attacking and devouring young children, using his teeth and claw-like hands as a ravening beast.

Dozens of people gave witness at his trial in 1573 when it was stated that he had eaten parts of his victims. Garnier would appear to be a medical case; a victim of *lycorexia*, which turned him into a brute beast and he confessed to attacking and murdering

over a dozen children.

He was condemned by his judges to be bound to the stake and burned alive; later, his ashes were scattered to the winds and the district was troubled by werewolves no more.

In 1598, at the Conde district of France local people were terrified at the activities of the wolf-man; villagers saw wolves feeding from the body of a small girl. With considerable courage a party went out to drive the animals off; later, a ragged-looking man with long hair and staring eyes was discovered behind a bush and taken before the magistrate.

His name was Jacques Rollet and at his trial he claimed to be able to change his shape into that of a wolf by means of ointment. He stated that the other two wolves at the scene were his brother and sister. In a remarkably humane decision for the times the judges commuted Rollet's death sentence and he was sent to an asylum.

As already mentioned, at Poligny in 1521 the werewolves caught at their grisly task were publicly executed and their misdeeds widely publicized; only three years earlier Jean Peyral, who was executed for his crimes, confessed that he had murdered a number of people while bodily transformed into a wolf. He admitted having intercourse with wolves and of having assumed the shape of the beast through a pact he

tricity fundamentally altered the psychology of mankind. No longer do human beings cower before an impenetrable darkness, and the terrors that haunted the ancients have devolved into mere entertainments. (Hence the modern popularity of the horror story, in that it represents the ultimate luxury.) Yet modern children still tremble with fear of a ravenous *thing* beneath the bed, and the moment before dawn, identified by statisticians as the time when most people slip out of life, continues to be known throughout the world as *the Hour of the Wolf*. From what dark recess of the collective unconscious does this persistent image emanate?

Theories proliferate. Anthropologist Robert Brain's monograph *The Hunters or the Hunted* described *Dinofelis*—a prehistoric carnivore with a build so clumsily muscular that it could only have hunted by night. Significantly, *Dinofelis* bones have been unearthed from the Transvaal to Ethiopia, which is to say throughout the original range of early man. Hand-reared rabbits and chickens go into spasms of terror when shown a hawklike shadow—could an instinctive dread of a predator which once threatened the very survival of the species lurk within human race-memory? Basing his own hypothesis on the writings of Carl Jung, psychologist Robert Eisler (in his *Man Into Wolf, An Anthropological Interpretation of Sadism, Masochism and Lycanthropy*) also suggests a prehistoric solution to the riddle of the werewolf. If primitive man had been vegetarian and peaceful, Eisler postulates, knowing nothing of aggression or violence, what

effect would the coming of the Ice Age have had upon his developing psyche? Could not the traumatic necessity of eating meat and wearing hides have resulted in barely repressed self-loathing? Such tension might well prove unbearable. Consider the ways in which Navajo ceremonial rites served to lessen the horrors of the hunt: participants invited their god Coyote to possess them during the stalking and the slaying and the butchering—transformation employed metaphorically to evade guilt.

But perhaps the traditional belief in a man-beast manifested no psychological dysfunction, no deeply rooted need to evade self-recognition. Perhaps instead it reflected something too harrowing to deal with in non-symbolic terms. Did wolves merely replace another creature in the public consciousness, a creature too fearful to contemplate? In today's world, an interest in the occult denotes an attempt at escapism (as pointed out by Charlotte Otter in her *Werewolves in Western Culture*), but at one time such interests demonstrated a desperate attempt to comprehend the problems of a society threatened by mankind's most bestial urges. Witchcraft was the earliest form of science.

Only the terminology changes. Contemporary lycanthropes (and, yes, such still are diagnosed) are often found to be suffering from chronic pseudoneurotic schizophrenia coupled with dissociative hysterical neurosis, and in the 1960s, the prevalence of recreational psychedelics (chemically similar to the alkaline-based salves used in

had made with the Devil.

But such cases were common throughout Europe and Russia in earlier times and the waves of trials, and public executions went on for several hundred years until the ages of reason and science put an end to them. Certainly, there was something behind the legend of the werewolf and a sort of mass-hysteria impelled people to confess.

There is no doubt also that a number of the accused had an affinity with wolves of the forest and an actual frenzy, recognized by medicine, seized them. Of course, many of the wilder stories and confessions were no doubt due to torture and may be safely discounted in the light of modern knowledge.

One of the best werewolf stories, purported to be truth, and which appears in a number of old records, concerned a landowner in France whose friend called upon him and asked him to come hunting. he was unable to go because he was expecting his lawyer but later in the day he decided to seek out his friend.

He saw him coming down the hillside, agitated and covered in blood; he told the landowner he had encountered a gigantic

wolf, had fired at it and missed. The beast sprang upon him and in the life-and-death struggle which followed he had managed to hack off the brute's right forepaw. he had brought it back with him in a sack.

He shook it out on the grass of the garden to show his friend. The landowner was consumed with horror when not a wolf paw but a human hand tumbled from the sack. He recognized it, from the ring with a peculiar stone on its finger, as being that of his wife!

The landowner went home but was told by the steward that his wife was resting and could not be disturbed. He had the door of her chamber broker down and found her in bed, white, ill and covered with blood. He summoned a doctor when it was found that her right hand was hacked from the wrist.

Somewhat unkindly, it may be felt, he denounced her to the authorities and she was publicly burned as a werewolf. The story is one of the best of its kind and may serve to stand for a host of others in ancient records.



medieval conjuring) contributed to several well-documented cases. Aside from bestial compulsions—wolvish sexual postures and a craving for raw flesh—most of those thus afflicted suffered from acute anxiety, alienation from human society (indicated by a predilection for hanging about cemeteries or deserted woods), and an obsession with satanism. Treating a female lycanthrope in 1975, psychiatrists suggested that her pathological metamorphosis "provided temporary relief from an otherwise consuming sexual conflict." Two years later a male patient who suffered from an irresistible urge to devour wild rabbits and howl at the moon was diagnosed with "chronic brain syndrome." In neither case could psychiatry help the patient, both of whom continued to deteriorate.

Innocence provides no immunity.



Ed Gein greedily devoured parts of his victims, and Ted Bundy once confessed to thinking of himself as "a sort of vampire." Jeffrey Dahmer, who also practiced cannibalism, kept a barrel of human bones in his abode, just as did that tailor of Chalins four centuries earlier. John Wayne Gacy

brutally slew thirty-three people (still an American record); but on October 12, 1992, Soviet officials sentenced a man believed to be the most savage serial killer of modern times. Ostensibly a quiet family man, for twelve years Andrei Chikatilo had stalked the most isolated regions of the Russian forests, killing women and children. Forensic evidence indicates that several of his victims were literally devoured alive. In an attempt

to comprehend these atrocities, researchers discovered only that Chikatilo's older brother had been kidnaped and cannibalized by neighbors during the great famine in the Ukraine, doubtless a formative event in the pathology of a young lycanthrope. And a lycanthrope he surely is. For what other name befits such an individual?

Other legends—like those concerning vampires and succubi—may have sprung from the collective unconscious, mere manifestations of sexual imagery, gaining power from the very force with which they were repressed. They remain potent illustrations of cultural preoccupations. But the myth of Lycanon may always have depicted a grim reality—a ravening nightmare as old as mankind itself.

MEN INTO WOLVES

THE HISTORY OF
LYCANTHROPIC LORE
ON THE MOVIE SCREEN



By Lawrence McCollum

Although werewolves have often lagged far behind vampires in popularity, there has been no shortage of snarling, hirsute menaces on the silver screen. Such creatures populated films that strongly influenced the writings of Stephen King and other authors whose works have, in turn, been adapted to the movie screen as chilling werewolf sagas. The depictions of werewolves have varied greatly from one film to another. A lycanthrope may be a tortured man who detests his bestial nature or he might be a sadistic brute who takes pleasure in his own savagery.

Over the years, scores of films have featured werewolves, so it might be better to begin our discussion with their earliest incarnations during the silent film era. *THE WEREWOLF* (Bison, 1913) is the first known thriller of its type and features a half-human, half-wolf creature found in Native American folklore. This 18 minute film short concerns a Navajo witch-woman whose spells transform her daughter into a werewolf that seeks revenge against intruding whites. Other silent thrillers usually listed in werewolf filmographies include *THE WOLFMAN* (1915), a Reliance-Mutual release that is, unfortunately, a lost film. Another feature, also entitled *THE WOLFMAN* (Fox, 1924), is often considered to be a 'cross-over' feature within the horror genre but actually has nothing to do with the supernatural. The latter flick, directed by Edward Mortimer, is a disturbing melodrama starring John Gilbert as a man whose drunken rages result in animal-like behavior.

A German thriller entitled *LE LOUP GAROU (THE WEREWOLF)* (1932) became the first talkie to feature a werewolf. The film is all but forgotten now and even in its time was obscured by such popular shockers as *WHITE ZOMBIE* (1932), *THE VAMPIRE BAT* (1933), *THE GHOUL* (1933), and other films that dealt with creepy stock horror characters. Although werewolf flicks had been around for nearly twenty years, solid hit featuring a lycanthropy theme had yet to be produced. This situation was to change in 1935 when Universal released the Carl Laemmle production of *THE WEREWOLF OF LONDON*.

Henry Hull stars in *THE WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, portraying a floriculturist who journeys to Tibet in search of the 'moon flower.' Dr. Glendon (Hull) discovers the rare night-bloomer in a lush valley but, to his horror, is attacked by a savage, east-like man. Glendon escapes with the Mariphasa plant but is bitten on the arm by his attacker. After returning to London, he doctor soon experiences the first symptoms of lycanthropy that include a painful throbbing in his forehead and an unusual sensitivity to strong lights. Little time has elapsed before he begins suffering nightly transformations into a bestial, slaving creature much like the one by whom he was attacked.

A series of gruesome murders are committed by Glendon who has been convinced by the strange Dr. Yogami (Warner Oland) that the medicinal blossoms of the

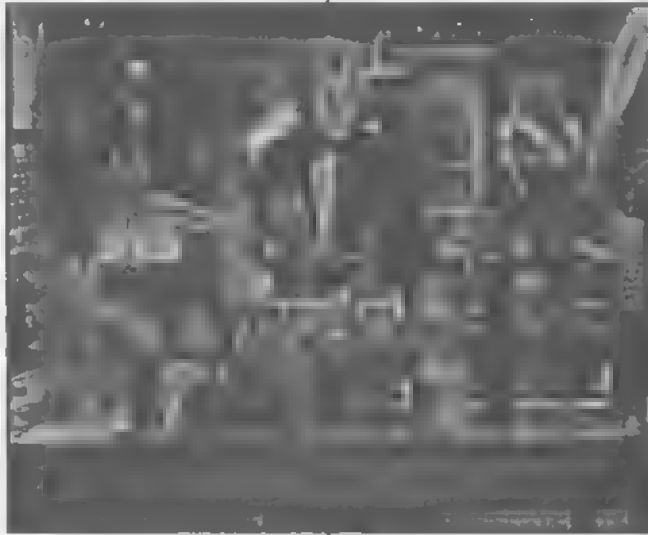
Mariphasa plant provide the only cure for lycanthropy. Eventually, we learn that Yogami is himself a werewolf—the same werewolf who attacked Glendon in Tibet. While in his beast-like state, Glendon attacks and kills Yogami and begins to stalk his own wife Lisa (Valerie Hobson). As he is poised to strike, gunshot rings out and Glendon crumbles to the ground. A policeman with a smoking pistol stands watching as Glendon expires; the man-beast returns to his human state and is finally at peace.

THE WEREWOLF OF LONDON is based on a story by Robert Harris but also borrows liberally from Robert Louis Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde". Henry Hull makes effective use of this skillful merger of epigrams and is thoroughly convincing as a man engaged in a tense struggle with his darkest urges. The actor is endowed with a creepy, cat-like make-up created by Jack Pierce while the frightening transformation sequences are accomplished through the double exposure techniques of fx artist John Fulton. The film's fine cast of players, including such performers as Lester Matthews and Spring Byington, is skillfully directed by the supple hand of Stuart Walker.

Seven years passed before Universal released its next werewolf flick—*THE WOLFMAN* (1941)—which allowed Lon Chaney Jr. to follow in his father's footsteps. Much like the elder Chaney, he became known for his portrayals of sympathetic monsters. His success in such roles came as no surprise after receiving an Oscar nomination for his brilliant performance as the tragic, hulking Lennie in *OF MICE AND MEN* (1939).

THE WOLFMAN tells the story of Larry Talbot (Chaney) who, after a long absence, returns to the posh estate of his aging father (Claude Rains). There is admirable restraint in the film's early scenes as we are introduced to the film's major characters including the lovely Gwen Conliffe (Evelyn Ankers) who works at an antique shop in the nearby village. Despite the presence of a budding romance between Talbot and Ms. Conliffe, sense of danger begins to emerge with the arrival of a band of gypsies. Among this group of colorful wanderers is a silent, old-eyed figure (Bela Lugosi) who carries the curse of lycanthropy. He attacks and mauls Talbot beneath the cold light of a full moon—but dies soon afterward. The innocent Talbot, however, faces the living death of a lycanthrope after suffering the bite of the werewolf and receiving the same affliction.

The entire countryside is now terrorized by the bloody savagery of the wolfman. Talbot attempts to find rationalizations that would explain the lengthening trail of dead bodies but finally accepts the truth about himself. The acceptance of this horrible reality is encouraged by the old gypsy woman, Maleva (Maria Ouspenskaya) who also provides the only real understanding for the tormented young Talbot's situation.



Eventually, he winsome Gwen becomes the target of the wolfman's bestial urges. Her concern for Talbot, whom she sees as deeply but inexplicably disturbed, prompts a foolish night-time search for him. Luckily, he elder Talbot (Rains) is nearby and the woman's screams bring him running to her aid. Armed with a silver-handled walking stick, he courageously attacks the wolfman and bludgeons him to death. Now exhausted, he man watches in horror as the menacing creature is transformed back into the lifeless form of his son. Death has brought an end to the nightmarish existence of Larry Talbot, though few have learned of his identity as the werewolf.

THE WOLFMAN features fine performances by a competent cast, another great Jack Pierce make-up and skillful direction by the talented George Waggner. Fluid camerawork and clever photographic effects display sharp details in attempts to create the proper atmosphere and mood of excitement. A few scenes inject psychological implications into the story, suggesting that Larry Talbot's baser instincts may somehow have resulted in his transformation. These overtones of Freudian anguish were to receive even more emphasis in Hammer's CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF (1961). The many fine qualities present in THE WOLFMAN have rarely emerged in one film. This landmark thriller is a classic of its era that should be regarded with the same respect as THE CAT PEOPLE (1942), DEAD OF NIGHT (1945) and BEDLAM (1946).

Werewolves were now established as mainstream heavies and other studios such as Columbia and PRC produced thrillers based on wolfman themes. THE UNDYING MONSTER (Fox, 1942) borrows clichés taken from old mysteries as the isolated English estate of the Hammond family becomes the scene of grisly murders being committed by a werewolf. TERROR HOUSE (1942) employs a similar scenario as a strange young man (James Mason) is suspected of being a marauding werewolf who terrorizes the Yorkshire moors. THE MAD MONSTER (PRC, 1942) endows the wolfman theme with a sci-fi twist as the crazed Dr. Cameron (George Zucco) uses a serum based on wolf's blood to turn men into werewolves. In the latter flick, his misguided act of science is intended to allow the creation of an army of werewolves to fight the Nazis.

A werewolf emerged as the hero of RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE (Col., 1943)



starring Bela Lugosi as a blood-lusting nobleman named Armand Tesla. The story takes place during the London blitz when a bombing unearths the corpse of what seems to be just another unfortunate victim of the nightly aerial attacks on the city. When home defense workers extract a pointed, wooden shaft from the chest of the dead man, they unwittingly revive the vampire who begins prowling the city in search of blood. Tesla exerts his mesmerizing influence over the hapless Andreas Obry (Matt Willis), lycanthrope-servant who must assist Tesla in his search for victims. Eventually, Obry finds the strength to resist his evil master and, though mortally wounded, manages to drive a stake through the heart of the vampire.

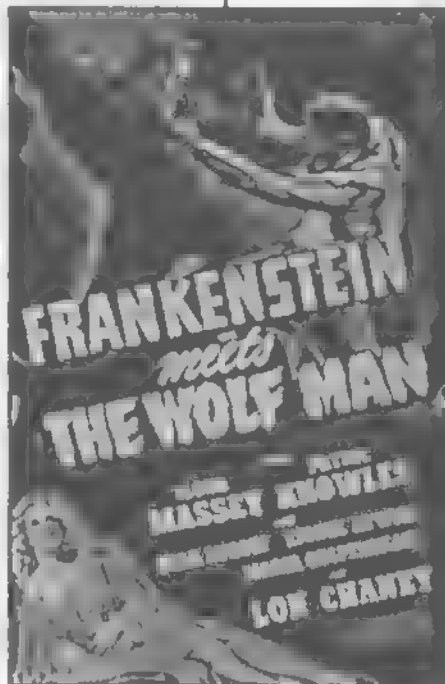
FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLFMAN (Univ., 1943) marks the return of Larry Talbot (Lon Chaney Jr.) whose final resting place is defiled by a pair of grave-robbers. When the protective covering of wolf-bane is removed from atop the corpse of Talbot, he curse of lycan-

thropy revives the wolfman who attacks and kills one of the intruders while the second man flees for his life. Once again, he wolfman is free to stalk innocent victims while his guilt-ridden human side searches for new ways to escape from his horrid existence.

Talbot manages to obtain the diary of the late Dr. Frankenstein and soon becomes convinced that the book will provide the solution to his terrible situation.

Frankenstein's super-science provides a method in which the life forces of both Talbot and the Frankenstein Monster can be drained away, thus bringing peace to both of them. The young Dr. Mannering (Patric Knowles) agrees to assist Talbot in the plan but, tragically, fanatical quest for knowledge has it's way with the doctor. "I must see Frankenstein's creation at the peak of it's power" states Mannering. The Monster indeed becomes more powerful, breaks free of it's restraints and grapples furiously with the wolfman. A bursting dam sends a lethal deluge into Castle Frankenstein, enveloping both of the combatants. Mannering and the winsome daughter (Ilona Massey) of Frankenstein escape the disaster.

Despite its incongruities and lapses in logic, FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLFMAN manages to succeed through its excellent production values and the presence of a fine cast of players. Director Roy William Neill provides the same excit-



ing action sequences and eerie, mist-filled landscapes that are present in his Sherlock Holmes thrillers. The idea of having the wolfman encounter Frankenstein's monster in the same film might have provided the situation for an unintended parody but this effort handles its unlikely premise with skill and polish, resulting in a spirited, reasonably satisfying thriller.

Larry Talbot continued to be a strangely romantic but troubled figure (who was hard as hell to kill) in a pair of Universal thrillers entrusted to Erle Kenton, a competent but ordinary second-string director. *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1944) has Talbot (Chaney) meeting up with a mixed bag of monsters including a mad doctor (Boris Karloff), murderous hunchback (J. Carrol Naish), the Frankenstein monster (Glen Strange) and Count Dracula (John Carradine). All of these characters manage to mingle through a number of contrived plot twists that may not be worth mentioning. Some mildly touching moments are provided when a bitter-sweet romance develops between the hunchback and a young gypsy girl (Elena Verdugo) whom he saves from a brutal flogging. Ms. Verdugo, however, is interested in the rugged Larry Talbot and the eternal triangle comes about. Except for a few poignant scenes involving these three tragic people, here is nothing new in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. Talbot is finally shot with a silver bullet and the hunchback is hurled to his death by The Monster. Dracula bites the dust (or turns into it) while both the mad Karloff and Frankenstein's creation are swallowed in a pit of quicksand.

Kenton's *HOUSE OF DRACULA* (1945) sees the return of Lon Chaney Jr. as Larry Talbot, live and well despite his demise in the previous film. This strikingly photographed thriller has Talbot finally being cured of lycanthropy by the brilliant Dr. Edelmann (Onslow Stevens). Unfortunately, Count Dracula (John Carradine) also comes upon the scene and infects Edelmann with his tainted blood. Now transformed into a crazed killer, he once benevolent doctor commits two brutal murders and revives the Frankenstein monster. Talbot is forced to shoot Edelmann before fleeing the castle with the doctor's lovely assistant (Martha O'Driscoll). The Monster is once more consumed by flames as a tray of volatile chemicals explodes, providing the obligatory final conflagration.

CRY OF THE WEREWOLF (Col., 1944) is a minor, occasionally creepy little thriller starring Nina Foch as Celeste La Tour, gypsy queen who has inherited the curse of the werewolf from her late mother. Atmospheric thriller tries to create the subtle undercurrent of horror present in Val Lewton's thrillers but the film lacks substance and doesn't quite succeed. Henry Levin, best known to horror buffs as the director of *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* (1959), made his directorial debut with this second-rate werewolf flick.

SHE-WOLF OF LONDON (Univ., 1946) is a routine horror-mystery in which youthful heiress Phyllis Allenby (June Lockhart) becomes obsessed with the fear that an



ancient family curse that turns her into a murderous werewolf on nights of the full moon. Indeed, several grisly killings do occur but we finally learn that her greedy Aunt Sara is responsible for the mayhem which is part of her plan to frame innocent Phyllis on murder charges, thus allowing the seizure of the family fortune. The final scene has auntie (Martha Winthrop) struggling with a crusty old housekeeper before falling down a staircase and meeting the end that she so richly deserves.

Lon Chaney Jr. sprouts fangs once again in Universal's satirical *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948) which features the studio's entire entourage of famous fiends. When Count Dracula (Bela Lugosi) decides to transplant Lou Costello's brain into the skull of the Frankenstein monster (Glen Strange), Larry Talbot turns up to help A&C battle the baddies. While attempting to explain his affliction with lycanthropy to the thick-headed Lou, an exasperated Talbot exclaims "You might not believe this—but I turn into a wolf each night" Lou, in response, quips "You and twenty million other guys." It would be another fourteen years before Chaney reprised his Talbot characterization on a 1962 spook spoof segment of the *Route 66* TV series.

In the 1950s, films about monstrous aliens and overgrown insects provided stiff competition for thrillers that featured the more 'traditional' movie monsters. Nevertheless, werewolf themes were employed in several quickies that delighted Saturday matinee crowds. *THE WEREWOLF* (Col., 1956), for example, concerns an innocent drifter (Steven Ritch) who is transformed into a snarling semblance of the title by a pair of demented scientists. Their motivations are, of course, very positive since, by turning all men into werewolves, mankind will have reverted to a simple state and thermonuclear devastation can be averted. This sf-horror premise is merged with the juvenile delinquency element in *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF* (1956), the first of AIP's rock 'n' shock effusions. Michael Landon stars as the moody, hostile Tony, a high schooler who is regressed into a murderous wolfman by nutty psychiatrist Whit Bissel. The teenage werewolf returns in AIP's *HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER* (1958) with the role being filled by Gary Clarke since the talented Landon had gone on to bigger things.

Veteran director Edgar G. Ulmer provides some effective touches for *THE DAUGHTER OF DR. JEKYLL* (Allied, 1957) which features several adroitly staged dream sequences. The hokey script, however, is loaded with genre clichés and mixes myths to suit its own purposes. The late Dr. Jekyll is discovered to have been a werewolf—or at least rumors spread by ignorant country folk claim this to be true. Jekyll's lovely daughter (Gloria Talbot) sees validity in the dark legend and becomes obsessed with the fear that she has inherited the curse of lycanthropy. When several grisly murders occur within the vicinity of the Jekyll estate, her fears seem to have been realized. We final-



ly learn that a trusted family friend (Arthur Shields) is responsible for the killing spree, having been afflicted with the same nocturnal 'mania' that destroyed Dr. Jekyll. Shields perishes in a tense struggle with hero John Agar

Hammer Films, after producing a number of chillers featuring classic horror characters, finally added a snarling lycanthrope to its horror stable with *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* in 1961. Based on Guy Endore's 1933 novel entitled *The Werewolf of Paris*, the film employs an intelligent script by John Elder, who transposes the novel's setting from France to Spain. The film begins with an innocent beggar (Richard Wordsworth being imprisoned as a cruel prank by a sadistic marquis. As the years pass, he beggar is all but forgotten and, fed uncooked meat, he begins to develop fangs. Deprived of human contact, he degenerates into an animal-like state. When the aging marquis is enraged by a mute servant girl who rejects his advances, he cruel nobleman has her thrown into the same prison cell that houses the now bestial beggar. Many years have passed since he has been near a beautiful girl and he brutally ravages her, dying soon afterward of his own exhaustion. Now seeking revenge, he girl escapes from the dungeon and makes her way to the sleeping quarters of the marquis where she fatally stabs the tyrant before fleeing the castle.

After several hours of desperate flight, the woman collapses near a cluster of trees where she is discovered by a middle-aged gentleman farmer (Clifford Evans). The kindly farmer brings the girl to his country home where he and his wife nurse her back to health. Soon discovered to be pregnant, he girl is welcomed as a permanent boarder by the aging couple. Unfortunately, the young woman fails to survive childbirth but her son Leon seems to be perfectly healthy. As he grows to boyhood, Leon begins to exhibit strange, animal-like behavior on nights of the full moon. These bestial interludes coincide with discoveries of slaughtered sheep by other farmers. After a musket-wielding shepherd shoots a wolf, Leon's adopted father is stunned when he finds a bullet wound in the boy's leg. Though visibly shaken by the incident, he farmer and his devoted wife decide to watch Leon closely and protect him from all danger when darkness falls. Love and compassion seem to cure the child and no further incidents occur.

The years pass and Leon (Oliver Reed), now a young man, journeys to Madrid where he finds work at a vineyard. Life is good for Leon during his early stay in the city, but he is soon beset by dark, primitive urges that bring tragic results. Several gruesome murders, one of which results in Leon's being jailed and charged with the crime. Bathed in the light of the full moon, Leon undergoes a horrifying transformation



and becomes a snarling, hirsute thing of horror. After murdering both a fellow prisoner and a burly guard, Leon escapes and is pursued through the streets of Madrid by an angry mob. Leon's adopted father, brandishing a musket loaded with a silver bullet, also searches for the tragic youth, now an inhuman fiend. There is a final confrontation between father and son in the belltower of a church where the werewolf is fatally shot; his horrid existence has been mercifully ended.

Oliver Reed delivers the greatest performance of his career as the monstrous but tragic Leon. Richard Wordsworth, best known as the astronaut-mutant in Hammer's *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN* (1956), is equally competent as the innocent beggar who degenerates into savagery. The familiar werewolf theme is effectively endowed with psychological overtones by John Elder's script which has Leon suffering his horrible transformations whenever he is placed in circumstances that remind him of his father's

decadent surroundings. A sleazy public inn, sordid brothel and dingy jail cell cause Leon's dark side to emerge in the form of a bestial, murderous creature. Similarly, each of us has a dark side that civilized man attempts to suppress. Such negative tendencies lurk beneath the surface, ready to explode once we forget our humanity.

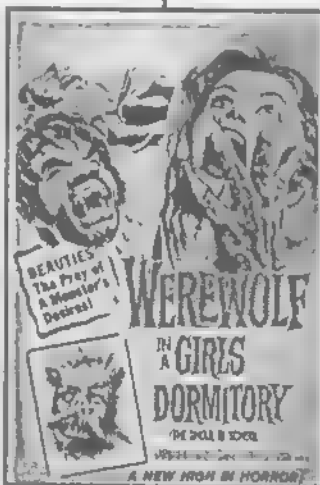
Somewhat less than a landmark film is *WEREWOLF IN A GIRL'S DORMITORY* (MGM, 1963) which is the U.S. release of an Italo-French-West German co-production originally titled *LYCANTHROPE*. In this quickie, reform school for girls becomes the scene of murder and mayhem as a scientifically created wolfman terrorizes the campus. The opening credits in the American version are accompanied by an embarrassing song entitled "The Ghoul in School."

With even less to recommend is *FACE OF THE SCREAMING WEREWOLF* (ADP, 1965), a third-rate Jerry Warren clinker that merges footage from two Mexican horror films—*LA MOMIA AZTECA* (*THE AZTEC MUMMY*, 1957) and *LA CASA DEL TERROR* (*THE HOUSE OF TERROR*, 1959).

Lon Chaney Jr., who starred in the latter flick, is given star billing in the Warren reconstruction and plays a mummified werewolf revived by a mad scientist in a secluded laboratory.

There is at least some coherency in Azteca's *LA LOBA* (*SHE-WOLF*, 1964), B-chiller set in the 1890s and concerning the grisly murders that occur within the vicinity of an isolated estate. The monstrous assassin, female werewolf, is being hidden on the estate by her family. This minor effort out-grossed its major competitor simultaneously playing in Mexico City—Otto Preminger's spectacular *THE CARDINAL* (1963). Viva Mexico!

The chilling *DR. TERROR'S HOUSE OF HORRORS* (Paramount, 1965) is an exceptional omnibus-styled horror film that features a



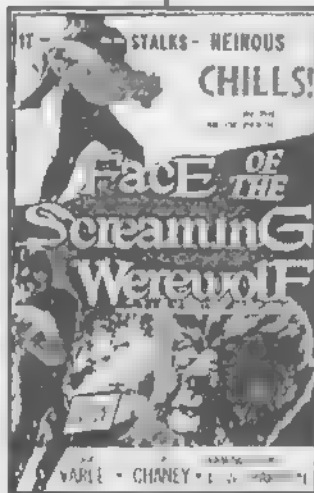
highly effective werewolf segment. In this creepy episode, Neil McCarthy inherits the family estate only to learn that an undead ancestor has emerged from the family vaults and resumed an ancient campaign of terror as a marauding werewolf. The familiar story, skillfully directed by Freddie Francis, is handled with considerable horrific flair. On the other end of the scale is *DR. TERROR'S GALLERY OF HORRORS* (American General, 1967), an inept collection of five cliché horror yarns in which one story features a vampire hunter who turns out to be a werewolf.

Dan Rowan and Dick Martin, of *Laugh-In* fame, tar in a disappointing horror spoof entitled *THE MALTESE BIPPY* (MGM, 1969) which features, among its cliché horror characters, a werewolf who rides a motorcycle. Although Rowan and Martin are better than their material, only dedicated *Laugh-In* fans can appreciate this one. Also in 1969 came the release of *BLOOD OF DRACULA'S CASTLE*, an unintentional bit of camp in which Robert Dix plays a small-time gangster who happens to be a werewolf.

FRANKENSTEIN'S BLOODY TERROR (1970) is the first in a series of films concerning Waldemar Daninsky (Paul Naschy), a scientist afflicted with lycanthropy. Shot in 1968 as *MARK OF THE WEREWOLF*, the film had 45 minutes cut from its original length before being retitled and released in the United States. Although the extensive pruning is thought by many to have destroyed a halfway decent film, the quality of the original effort is questionable. Paul Naschy's werewolf moves like a drunken ballet dancer during a number of badly directed sequences and the trance-like acting of most of the cast members is certainly no help.

Probably the best known entry in the Daninsky series is *ASSIGNMENT TERROR* (1970) which was released directly to television by American-International. Michael Rennie stars as an alien agent who attempts to prey on mankind's deepest fears by synthesizing the most frightening creatures of legend and using them as instruments of murder. Replicas of Count Dracula, the Frankenstein monster and other fearful monstrosities spread terror until they are destroyed by hero Craig Hill with the assistance of werewolf Paul Naschy. Despite its stable of stock horror characters, the film is a crashing bore.

Other Paul Naschy thrillers include such creepy titles as *NIGHT OF THE WEREWOLF* (1969) and *THE WEREWOLF'S SHADOW* (1970). *FURY OF THE WOLFMAN* (1970) pits the snarling Daninsky against a female werewolf. *DR. JEKYLL VS. THE WEREWOLF* (1971) has the tortured lycanthrope seeking help from the grandson of Dr. Jekyll. *CURSE OF THE DEVIL* (1973) presents Daninsky as a dedicated scientist who is, at first, normal but becomes infected with lycanthropy by a beautiful girl. These films seem to travel in time from one film to another and Daninsky's affliction with lycanthropy is given several different explanations. There is really no stable framework in the Daninsky series and the



films display a definite lack of consistency.

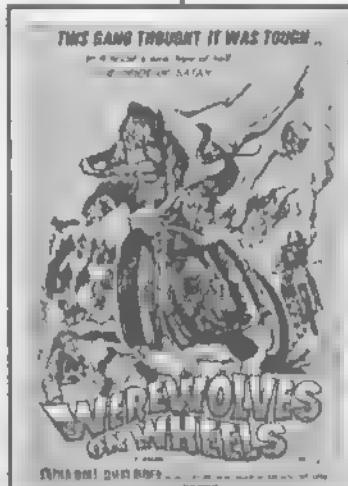
Fanfare Films, after releasing several motorcycle gang thrillers, decided to follow the example of American-International by producing a weird, hybrid shocker that merged horror melodrama with a youth-slanted scenario. AIP's teenage monster flicks had already proven the commercial possibilities of such offbeat thrillers. Consequently, Fanfare's release of *WEREWOLVES ON WHEELS* (1971) wasn't limited to bookings at neighborhood and drive-in theaters. The flick received a prestigious world premiere booking at the McVickers Theater in Chicago.

WEREWOLVES ON WHEELS examines the mayhem that occurs when a gang of outlaw bikers enters a Satanic retreat, scoffing at Satan and finally brutalizing the devil's followers. The cultists respond by casting a spell on gang leader Adam (Stephen Oliver) and his 'old lady' (D.J. Anderson), turning them into werewolves. Eventually, the rest of the gang, which has been noticeably eroded by the werewolves, manage to burn the murderous creatures to death. Despite its ridiculous premise, the film is partially redeemed by its lively rock score and excellent photography. Director Michel Levesque is just good enough at his craft to create an occasional good scene (somewhat out of context with the rest of the film). Thus, fans of good-bad movies can enjoy this flick, though more discriminating film-goers may not be able to watch it comfortably.

Films made for television finally began to employ werewolf themes with the telecast of *MOON OF THE WOLF* (ABC, 1972), predictable but nicely paced chiller featuring a good cast. David Janssen stars as a small town sheriff who must identify and destroy the werewolf that has been terrorizing the community. Barbara Rush and Bradford Dillman deliver fine supporting performances while director Daniel Petrie provides several effective scenes of horror-suspense.

A rarely seen British thriller entitled *THE VAMPIRES ARE COMING! THE WEREWOLVES ARE HERE!* (1972) might have deserved a mild recommendation if the producers had spent some money on it. The story concerns the plight of a young bride-to-be who really doesn't care to continue the lycanthropic legacy of her family. Despite some creepy moments and the presence of one or two interesting characters, his effort is bludgeoned by indifferent acting and a low, now budget.

It's always nice to see Kerwin Mathews on the screen again, even in a second-rate thriller like *THE BOY WHO CRIED WEREWOLF* (Univ., 1973). Mathews is more than competent as a guy, own on his luck, who becomes saddled with the additional burden of being a werewolf. When his son (Scott Sealey) becomes aware of dad's sorry state, here are desperate attempts by the youngster to convince the authorities that a werewolf is on the prowl. Director Nathan Juran, long a horror fave, provides some human interest in a few quietly effective sequences but creates little in the way of atmosphere or excitement value. Much like *WEREWOLVES ON WHEELS*, his flick tries for



a youthful slant by including a needless sub-plot involving a group of long-haired Jesus freaks.

Apparently, he lycanthrope featured in *THE WEREWOLF OF WASHINGTON* (Diplomat, 1973) is intended as some kind of metaphor for modern evils. Dean Stockwell plays the hairy horror that prowls the streets of Washington at night while, during the day, he human Stockwell witnesses the horrors of governmental dishonesty, CIA ruthlessness and Watergate-like shenanigans. The attempts to present Stockwell's nocturnal activities as a reflection of political and sociological horrors fail to result in a coherent philosophical statement. Nevertheless, he film deserves credit for trying something new and horror buffs may enjoy seeing such familiar faces as those of Michael (COUNT FRANKENSTEIN'S CASTLE OF FREAKS) Dunn and Thayer (*Dark Shadows*) David.

Director Dan Curtis, also of *Dark Shadows* fame, handles a mildly diverting TV flick entitled *SCREAM OF THE WOLF* (ABC, 1974) in which a small town is apparently being terrorized by a werewolf. Actually, the Richard Matheson script is just another variation on "The Most Dangerous Game" type of scenario, with big-game hunter Byron Douglas (Clint Walker) seeking human prey until there is a final confrontation with hero Peter Graves.

THE BEAST MUST DIE (Cinerama, 1974) also involves a big-game hunter (Calvin Lockhart) who becomes convinced that a werewolf is present among the mixed bag of guests staying at his posh country estate. Lockhart has a number of exotic gadgets at his command and, in one scene, brandishes a machine-gun loaded with silver bullets. The film's slick production values and the fine performances of genre favorites Peter Cushing and Anton Diffring help to overcome the presence of many clichés taken from old British whodunits. Script is based on a short story by James Blish entitled "There Shall be No Darkness."

LEGEND OF THE WEREWOLF (1975), another Freddie Francis effort, finds its source of mayhem in a French zoo where an animal handler (David Rintoul) prowls the night as a lethal wolfman. Peter Cushing plays the shrewd investigator who finally discovers the identity of the beast-man and the competent supporting cast also includes Ron Moody, Roy Castle and Hugh Griffith. The good performances and nice pacing, however, can't quite compensate for the film's lack of originality and the use of a rather unfrightening werewolf make-up.

It's hard to imagine a film as silly as a TV feature called *THE WEREWOLF OF WOODSTOCK* (ABC, 1975) but this flick certainly lives up to its title. Set shortly after the 1969 Woodstock Music Festival, the story depicts the mayhem that occurs after a hippie-hating local bigot (Tige Andrews) is transformed into a werewolf by a massive electrical shock. Police investigators finally trap the hairy fiend after learning

that the sound of a hippie playing an electric guitar will enrage the werewolf to the point that he will make a reckless open appearance—in full view of a police sharpshooter (Michael Parks). This late night feature, hot on videotape, is a typical teen-slanted Dick Clark production that fails to give teens credit for having a brain.

Self-destructive attempts to be adult are only part of the problem with the Italian-made *DAUGHTER OF A WEREWOLF* (Dialchi, 1976). Annik Barel stars as Daniela, a woman whose intense sex drives transform her into a werewolf. This basic premise provides an excuse for a number of lurid sequences, brutal sexual assaults, and lesbian interludes. The only bright spot is a good performance by Frederick Stafford as the police inspector who tracks down the wolf-woman. Director Rino diSilvestro is unable to create a mood of tension or eroticism, and the film is largely third-rate in every regard.

Earl Owensby, who often refers to himself as 'the redneck movie mogul,' produced and starred in *WOLFMAN* (EO Prod., 1979) which played the southern drive-in circuit but wasn't seen much of anywhere else. Set in 1910 Georgia, the story depicts the plight of Colin Glasgow (Owensby) whose affliction with the 'devil's curse' causes him to become a werewolf at night. Owensby is ferocious enough as the werewolf but delivers a typically wooden performance as the human Glasgow. The make-up is sufficiently frightening, though the lap-dissolve sequences were handled more effectively in *THE WEREWOLF OF LONDON* and *THE WOLFMAN*. Though admittedly no big deal, the film is still better than average when compared to most of the other efforts produced by Owensby's North Carolina-based company.

Probably the closest thing to a landmark werewolf flick in recent years is *THE HOWLING* (Avco-Embassy, 1981), a passably good chiller distinguished mainly by its superb special effects sequences. The story begins by introducing us to a courageous TV news anchorwoman named Karen White (Dee Wallace) who agrees to become the bait in a plan to entrap a crazed serial killer. Karen has a terrifying encounter with the psychotic Eddie (Rob Bottin) in a darkened room but the police rush to her aid and the madman (apparently) dies in a hail of bullets. The terror is by no means ended as the body of the killer mysteriously disappears from the morgue and the distraught Karen begins to suffer from a series of terrible nightmares.

After attending several therapy sessions conducted by her psychiatrist, Dr. George Waggner (Patrick MacNee), Karen accepts the doctor's suggestion that she leave the city and head for the mountain retreat that he operates. The Colony, as he calls it, should provide the peace and positive contact that the woman needs. In the days that follow, however, Karen and her husband Bill (Chris Stone) encounter a series of bizarre, frightening developments that lead to a



shocking revelation. The Colony is actually a refuge for a cult of werewolves; even the seemingly benevolent Dr. Waggner is afflicted with lycanthropy. When innocent Bill is claimed by the cult, hose members include the local sheriff (Slim Pickens) and the undead Eddie, Karen attempts to flee back to the city. She is rescued by a rifle-wielding co-worker (Dennis Dugan) who has a good supply of silver bullets and a working knowledge of werewolf lore. Their escape from The Colony proves to be a hollow victory as Karen, infected with lycanthropy by a werewolf's bite, is transformed into a hairy horror in full view of her TV audience. Dugan reluctantly fires a silver bullet into Karen, ending her brief existence as a werewolf.

The transformation sequences in *THE HOWLING* are astonishingly effective and employ Rob Bottin's clever fx techniques rather than the traditional lap-dissolve method. These new special effects are so complex that they would probably deserve a separate full-length article to fully examine their development and execution. Unfortunately, the John Sayles script is somewhat less impressive as horrific suspense sequences fail to merge effectively with the film's rather weak comic touches. There are a number of scenes that employ the trappings of the 'idiot' plot in which characters place themselves in situations that any sane person would attempt to avoid. Nevertheless, here are a few clever in-jokes and a number of references to well-established genre figures. Several major characters bear the names of such popular horror directors as George Waggner (of *THE WOLFMAN* fame) and Fred (LEGEND OF THE WEREWOLF) Francis. Dick Miller turns up as Walter Paisley (again?), a bookstore owner who has a funny encounter with an obnoxious browser (Forry Ackerman!). Even AIP legend Roger Corman turns up for a few seconds as a man impatiently waiting to use a public telephone. For all its flaws, *THE HOWLING* still emerges as good entertainment and is certainly never dull.

Somewhat less effective is *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* (Univ., 1981) which contains similar special effects techniques created by the talented Rick Baker. When American hitch-hiker David Kessler (David Naughton) foolishly wanders across the English moors on the night of the full moon, he is attacked and mauled by a werewolf. The unfortunate young man gradually exhibits the symptoms of lycanthropy, much to the dismay of his British girlfriend (Jenny Agutter). Eventually, the transformation is completed and Kessler terrorizes the streets of London until a crack unit of British troops brings him down in a burst of gun-fire.

Despite its excellent production values, *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* emerges as a schizophrenic thriller that wobbles feebly from high powered shock sequences to mildly diverting romantic interludes with some fair touches of black humor dispersed throughout. The film

rarely succeeds at being a parody and it's only passable satirical points lessen the impact of this effort as a horror melodrama. In the end, it is less effective than the moderately budgeted *THE HOWLING*.

A werewolf turns up in *FRANKENSTEIN ISLAND* (1983), apparently because director Jerry Warren wanted a full complement of cliché horror characters. Robert Clarke and his fellow castaways, stranded on the title island, encounter some horrifying pseudo-scientific activities amid endless native dancing by scantily clad girls. The presence of Warren regulars Clarke and Katherine Victor might be expected and star John Carradine's talents have been wasted in a number of third-rate quickies. But what are the fine dramatic actors

Andrew Duggan and Cameron Mitchell doing in such a shameful pic?

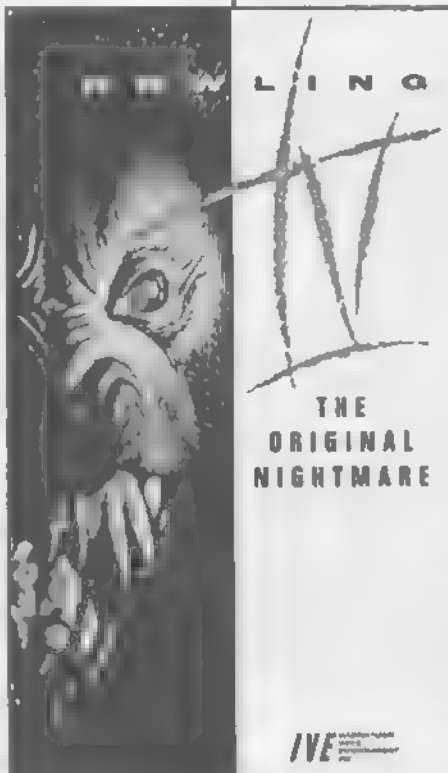
Philippe Mora's *THE HOWLING II: YOUR SISTER IS A WEREWOLF* (1984) features a precious few snatches of the clever dialogue and horrific gems that were contained in its predecessor. Christopher Lee stars as an expert on werewolf lore who teams up with a tough cop (Reb Brown) and heads for Transylvania to hunt down the queen of the werewolves. Minor effort, shot in Czechoslovakia, contains competent performances by Lee and Ferdy Mayne plus a few eerie scenes.

With somewhat more to recommend is *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* (Palace, 1984), frightening, grown-up retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood" presented in an elaborate but fragmented fashion. The sexual awakening of young Rosalind (Sarah Patterson) forms the core of this episodic thriller in which several stories of werewolves are linked together by an effective framing device—the presence of a charming Granny (Angela Lansbury) who enjoys telling spook tales. Unfortunately, the film is a bit disjointed and a bit slow-moving despite its sporadic bursts of energy. The

main theme, involving man's fear of his own sexuality, as handled more effectively in Val Lewton's *THE CAT PEOPLE* (1942). Nevertheless, the photography is excellent and *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* contains superb special effects sequences created by Christopher Tucker. The film should be seen as one of the better examples of a fairly recent grade-A horror film.

SILVER BULLET (Paramount, 1985), based on Stephen King's "The Cycle of the Werewolf," comes off as routine whodunit stuff about a town being terrorized by an unknown killer who turns out to be a werewolf. The corny script is tempered somewhat by good production values plus great character acting by Gary Busey and Terry (THE STEPFATHER) O'Quinn.

Werewolf sagas aimed at the teen and pre-teen markets continued to waste valuable studying time as youngsters flocked to see such time-killers as *TEEN WOLF* (1985) starring Michael J. Fox. This minor flick has a high school loser (Fox) turning into a werewolf and suddenly becoming Big Man On Campus. *TEEN WOLF TOO* (1987) has the Fox



character's cousin (Jason Bateman) experiencing the same transformation and finding that life as a high school werewolf isn't all that it's cracked up to be.

THE MONSTER SQUAD (Tri-Star, 1987) is a comparatively innocuous, fairly entertaining juvenile horror flick about a host of horror heavies (including the Wolfman and Count Dracula) invading a small town. Only a handful of young monster movie fans possess the information necessary to launch an offensive against such creatures who are impervious to ordinary violence. Though really nothing to scream about, the film pays effective homage to classic Universal horror characters, thus providing some appeal to both young and old horror fans.

THE HOWLING III (1987) is the better of director Philippe Mora's two entries in the series. This time out, he werewolves are a bit more sympathetic and nearly emerge as a genuine sub-culture that is threatened by the violence and intolerance of mainstream society. The presence of a sociological interest might be expected by those familiar with Mora's work which includes the mildly controversial DEATH OF A SOLDIER (1986). The latter film attempted to depict both the horrors of military blundering and the blatant intrusion of the American military machine in another society. THE HOWLING III, however, finally spends too much of its time attempting to satisfy horror addicts while pandering to those who prefer mild satire. Caught between three stools, the film finally loses its social conscience.

THE HOWLING IV: THE ORIGINAL NIGHTMARE (1988) features a few good moments of horror-suspense, due mainly to the talents of director John Though, who handled the nightmarish THE INCUBUS (1982). The story of a writer being trapped in an isolated cabin surrounded by werewolves begins fairly well but finally becomes tiresome. Its a NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD instant replay, with lycanthropes attempting to provide the chills rather than ghoul.

One might see THE HOWLING V (1989) as a tribute to Agatha Christie since the story is yet another rehash of "Ten Little Indians." A group of people in an old castle are gradually reduced in number by a killer who is secretly a werewolf. Cheaply made thriller has a nice Gothic atmosphere but it's basic premise was handled a bit more effectively in THE BEAST MUST DIE. Nevertheless, the film is still better than THE HOWLING VI (1991), an inept quickie concerning an evil carny who attempts to manipulate a tortured werewolf.

That's about it for the 1980s—unless a few readers feel

that some mention should be made of MY MOM'S A WEREWOLF (1989). There, I've mentioned it.

Entering the '90s, we have MAD AT THE MOON (1992), a very uneven werewolf flick set in the American west of the 19th century. Mary Stuart Masterson stars as a young woman who is being forced by her mother to marry a wealthy rancher. Ms. Masterson is actually in love with a young drifter, but the austerity of frontier life and the promise of security with a wealthy husband makes the choice between the two beaus a simple one—at least for her mother. The marriage of convenience proves to have dire consequences though, especially since the groom happens to be afflicted with lycanthropy. Only the handsome young drifter can rescue the unfortunate bride from her horrendous situation.



There are some competent performances in MAD AT THE MOON, especially by Fionnula Flanagan and Hart Bochner. Unhappily, director Martin Donovan tries to accomplish a bit too much in this confusing thriller, which begins to wobble feebly from western melodrama to supernatural horror, with the needless interspersions of sexually explicit material. The end result is an interesting failure, which is quite a pity. It's too bad that Donovan

couldn't get his genres straight.

Finally, the much-hyped WOLF (Columbia, 1994) is a slightly overrated but generally amusing effort, notable primarily for its impressive credits and some interesting social commentary. The story introduces us to a paunchy, middle-aged editor named Will Randall (Jack Nicholson), who finds little joy in his mundane existence. He stoically accepts the abuse of his demanding wife and realizes that his career is taking him nowhere. In addition to these problems, he finds his job suddenly threatened by an arrogant, greedy young rival (James Spader). Despite his sad lot in life, Will makes some futile attempts at linking himself with young Laura Alden (Michelle Pfeiffer), the daughter of his publisher.

One night, things change drastically and unexpectedly for Will when he is attacked by a snarling creature on a lonely road in Vermont. Soon after suffering the bite of a 'wolf,' he notices a new growth of hair on skin surrounding the wound. The physical changes—minor at first—seem less dramatic than the changes that take place with Will's personality. Will becomes much more aggressive, not only in the business world but also in his blossoming relationship with the comely Laura. No longer resentful of the older man's advances, Laura feels drawn to his animal magnetism, which

she previously failed to notice. Will's transformation continues with results that prove to be horrendous. Sprouting fangs and a thick layer of body hair, he becomes a murderous lycanthrope that prowls the night in search of victims. The mayhem continues until Will, in a violent climax, suffers the fate of Larry Talbot.

It is this predictable ending that is probably the film's weakest moment, although there are a few other failings. Some scenes that attempt to merge horror and humor—such as Will's evening encounter with muggers—are of the sort that were done more effectively in *THE HOWLING*. Die-hard fans of werewolf flicks might be disappointed by the film's lack of emphasis on Will's overt transformation into a werewolf. There are no lengthy special effects sequences depicting the emergence of lycanthropic features. Instead, the film relies on eerie camera-work and effective use of lighting to convey the proper atmosphere of tension. Jack Nicholson brings some subtle touches to his characterization of Will Randall. A mere twitch of a nostril at the appropriate moment, for example, indicates that his character has developed a heightened, animal-like sense of smell. Nicholson may not quite be the consummate actor that he is purported to be, but he again proves his ability to endow his characters with a number of intriguing idiosyncrasies.

The human relationships depicted in *WOLF* can, at several points, be seen as yet another variation on the Jekyll-Hyde theme. There are obvious grade-B origins inspirations, and the character relations are, in fact, quite similar to those depicted in the British-Japanese SF/horror film entitled *THE MANSTER* (Trans-Lux, 1963). The latter flick, as some will recall, had a middle-aged American reporter (Peter Dyneley) being injected with a serum that brings about frightening physical and psychological changes. Dyneley becomes considerably more aggressive and is increasingly dissatisfied

with married life. He soon becomes a veritable man about town and carries on an affair with a seductive young woman.

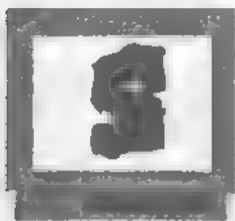
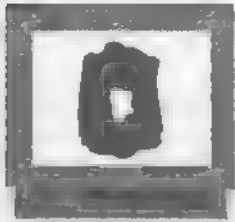
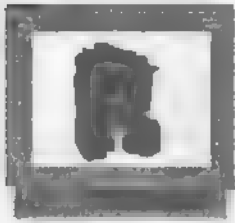
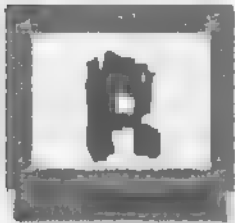
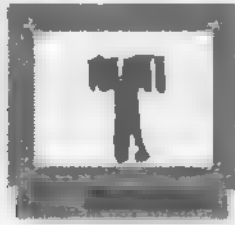
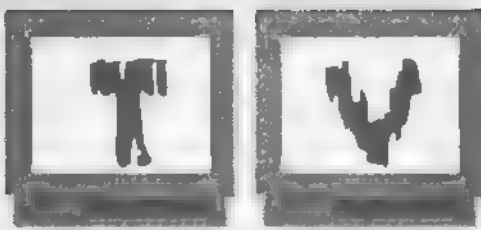
Consequently, *WOLF* is distinguished by its social satire and director Mike Nichols makes the most of the satirical points contained in the script. One remembers the biting wit of Nichols' *THE GRADUATE* (1967), which saw contempo-

rary society as despiritualized, hypocritical, and ultimately corrupt. *WOLF* emphasizes the paradox of life within the corporate world and within a society controlled by big business. Ostensibly, our culture encourages social consciousness, spiritual values and valid human relationships. On a practical level, this veneer of civility becomes little more than a facade for businessmen who ruthlessly take the women and the material things they want, no matter how many lives are destroyed in the process. Will Randall, a pitiable wimp drained of his manhood, finds himself revitalized through an unearthly means that is downright terrifying. The bloody reign of a werewolf shows the corporate wolves what 'survival of the fittest' really means.

In retrospect, we can see that the werewolf has been a fairly serviceable character throughout horror film history. He is often presented as a repulsive,

two-dimensional villain but, at other times, as emerged as a complex, troubled man who hates his own bestial nature. Werewolves have symbolized man's most primitive instincts and, as in the original *THE HOWLING*, have emerged as the most savage of love-makers (a function usually ascribed to vampires). Perhaps it is the sense of tragedy, however, that attracts us to the most famous of movie werewolves. One need only to stare into the sad eyes of Larry Talbot to realize that there is a soul behind the fangs.





Werewolves are infrequently found in made-for-television fare, and when they *do* make an appearance, it's usually a disappointment. Whereas that old TV favorite, the vampire, is (typically) humanoid in appearance and (typically) kills in an acceptably restrained fashion, the werewolf is just too bestial for television to do the archetype justice.

The earliest television werewolves are among the tamest: The venerable gothic soap opera *Dark Shadows* featured a werewolf in Quentin Collins, who faithfully changed with the coming of the full moon, but did little of real interest. In *MOON OF THE WOLF* (1972), David Janssen plays a sheriff investigating murders in the bayou that could have been committed by a lycanthrope. In *DEATH MOON* (1978), Robert Foxworth (*PROPHECY*, *THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER*) turns into a werewolf because of a native Hawaiian curse. In an episode of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, Carl Kolchak encounters a werewolf on a cruise ship. The transformations in the above-cited films and series are all are shown via dissolves, *a la* *THE WOLFMAN*, which serve to give these interpretations a very dated appearance.

"Family Reunion," a Tom Savini-directed episode of *Tales From The Darkside*, tells the tale of a man on the run who chains up his eight-year-old son during the full moon because the boy turns into a werewolf. When the boy's mother (played by Pat Tallman of the *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* remake) shows up to reclaim her son, she turns out to be a werewolf as well. I gather this was supposed to be a poignant tale of the werewolf, but the kid looks too much like Eddie Munster for this episode to be taken too seriously.

The aforementioned efforts all dealt with "classic" werewolves, and were uniformly typical and predictable—largely due to the fact that commercial TV can't or won't show the violence of the werewolves' attacks (obviously not a problem in recent cinematic releases such as *THE WOLFEN* (1981), *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* (1981) and *THE HOWLING* film series [1981-91]). Werewolves on television didn't really become very interesting until quite recently.

Fox Network's *Werewolf Series* (1987-1988) featured werewolves designed by Rick Baker, and an evil villain portrayed by Chuck Connors (*TOURIST TRAP*) who regularly transformed into a hairy version of *The Incredible Hulk*. In a typical episode: the series' protagonist, who's a werewolf on nights of the full moon, is befriended by someone (often a woman); the full moon interrupts, or the villain does; the protagonist must move on, in search of the King of the Werewolves so he can stop the lycanthropic bloodline and end the curse. All the while, a bounty hunter is in pursuit.

The werewolf here is very much in the tradition of Lon Chaney's *Wolfman*—he's a tormented man

by Kevin Lindenmuth



who doesn't want to be a monster. The look of the show is very moody and the tone of the episodes is serious. This series is perhaps an instance of a the legend being adhered to a little *too* rigidly. After several episodes, the show became fairly tedious

Although suffering from shortcomings of its own, Universal's *She-Wolf Of London* (1991) series more than made up for *Werewolf's* redundancy. Each week, a different monster appeared—from Succubi to Bog Zombies to Aliens. Randi, played by Kate Hodge (*TEXAS-CHAINSAW 3*) is attacked by a werewolf on a camping trip on the moors (*a la* AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON). Befriended by her college professor, who is kind enough to chain her up in his



cellar on nights of the full moon, they investigate—or are drawn to—supernatural phenomena because...hey, since she's a werewolf now, they believe in all this supernatural stuff.

Unlike *Werewolf*, which lacked interesting stories, the biggest problem with *She-Wolf* is the wolf. The costume is very inadequate—a black body stocking and a mask with a lot of hair. When the two characters moved to America and the series' name was changed to *Love And Curses* in its short (thank God) second season, the makeup then changed to a more typical, but equally inept, look. The poor makeup is probably the underlying reason why the transforma-



tion shots were kept to a minimum and the shows populated by more human-looking creatures (the more human-looking, the less costly the effects). The most engaging episodes are the ones that deal with the downside of being a werewolf—for example, how Randi and her professor, who becomes her love interest, can never be together because "those feelings" bring out the beast in her. Although I enjoyed Universal's *She-Wolf* more than Fox's *Werewolf*, it's definitely the sillier of the two.

The most recent television werewolf effort is HBO's *TOTAL ECLIPSE*. Here, Mario Van Peebles plays the leader of an elite police squad that's comprised of "partial" werewolves. There are a few interesting variations from standard werewolf lore. For example, the werewolves' claws, rather than popping out of their fingertips, protrude from their knuckles (*a la* Marvel Comics' Wolverine); and when Peebles transforms into a full werewolf—via computerized morphing effects—not only does his body change, but his clothes are "absorbed" into the transformation as well.

Four Colored & Penny

A brief, selective look at werewolves in comics

(3rd in a series)

by Peter Infantino

Marvel's *Werewolf By Night* was the first strip to feature a werewolf as its continuing character. Incredibly (you'll know what I mean if you've read any issues), it also became the longest-running werewolf title yet, spanning over 50 issues in three separate magazines, plus the obligatory "percs," like guest-starring with Spider-Man in *Marvel Team-Up*, and appearing on Slurpee cups with the other Marvel heroes in the early '70s. The Werewolf actually got his start in *Marvel Spotlight* #2 (Feb., 1972) and soon after graduated to his own title.

When our hero isn't a werewolf by night, he's teenage rebel Jack Russell. Our young hero discovers on his 18th birthday that he's finally getting hair on his chest. Because his father was a warlock and werewolf, Russell is cursed to follow in daddy's pawprints. In the first installment, we're introduced to: Russell; his foxy and ultra-hip sister Lissa; his meek but filthy rich mother Laura; his greedy and self-centered stepfather Philip; and the family's sinister (and gratefully not much else) chauffeur, Grant. Evidently, Philip and Grant are not just drawn bad, they *are* bad, as they join forces to put Laura into an early grave, thereby leaving all the moola to hubby. But even a nasty car crash can't keep Laura from telling Jack all about his seedy father and the nasty legacy handed down to him and presumably Lissa as well. Jack then begins his long and arduous journey to find a cure for his lycanthropic ways.

As mentioned above, I find it incredible that this strip could have lasted five issues, let alone five years. Admittedly, any comic that goes through eleven different creative teams in its first 21 issues is going to have its up and downs, but aside from three or four issues, it's close to unreadable. And when *WWBN* finally got a creative team to stay on for more than two or three issues, it was one that few would categorize as even competent (Doug Moench, writer and Don Perlin, artist). But the writer and artist weren't the only problem with this title. Like a lot of the Marvel comics at the time (and moreso today), *WWBN*

suffered from a lack of foresight, mediocre to downright lame foes, and weak characters. *Literally* weak in the case of the title character himself. The reader never witnesses that the werewolf is a deadly threat, since he's always being pushed around by common thugs. A werewolf with clipped claws?

And how about some of those villains? Let's see, there was...

AGATHA TIMLEY AND HER HUNCHBACKED IRON-HANDED SERVANT, KRAIG

Agatha, who may or may not be a witch (it would help to be filled in on these minor details), kidnaps Jack to get ahold of a mysterious book (*The Darkhold*) written by Jack's ol' debbil dad. After Kraig gets the kibbosh, Agatha ups and dies. Why? You tell me.

BLACKGAR AND HIS BEAUTIFUL BUT STRANGE DAUGHTER, MARLENE

Jack must travel to a California castle where he meets the goofy Blackgar, who is creating mutants to cure his daughter's affliction. She has the amazing habit of turning folks into stone with her stare. In the end, she gets the old Medusa-looks-into-a-mirror-and-turns-herself-into-stone trick.

AELRIC THE MAD MONK

Father Jocquez falls under the spell of *The Darkhold* after he successfully translates it for Jack. Aelric resembles an illo for an old Hugh Cave story, but the best is saved for his laughable Minotaur bodyguard, Dragonus.

Other stories, which featured guest stars like Dracula, Brother Voodoo, Tigra, and Morbius, were at least interesting. In fact, the Dracula story took place during Marv Wolfman's 5 issue tenure on *WWBN*, a short but effective cycle of stories that attempted to endow Russell and his supporting crew with lives. But, unfortunately, Wolfman went on to other projects (I'd say bigger and better, but he quit *WWBN* to work full-time on *Crazy*, Marvel's low-rent



ripoff of *Mad*),¹ and another team came in to return us to mediocrity.

Towards the end, writer Doug Moench, probably on orders from higher-ups, "re-invented" the Russell werewolf and transformed him into a superhero. Sales were horrible, so Moench had to grasp at anything he could, but this is really where the strip got wild.

Jack's sister Lissa finally gets all hairy and manages to retain a rather discreet appearance with a well-placed ripped bodice. Another werewolf is introduced, a black character who, of course, turns into a black werewolf (does that mean that Russell—being a brown werewolf—is actually Mexican, not Irish as stated in the premiere episode?). All this culminates in the final WWBN story (#43, March, 1977), the impressively titled "The Terrible Threat of the Tri-Animan," in which the werewolf, having attained "superhero status," visits the Avengers mansion with Iron Man and is fed hot broth by the Avengers' butler, Jarvis!

The one event that Moench and Perlin accomplished during these last few issues (and the only thing that makes WW collectible) was the introduction of fan favorite Moon Knight, a bounty hunter sent to capture the werewolf, in #32.

I assume it's only a matter of time before Marvel resuscitates Jack Russell and his cuddly alter ego—as they've done with Ghost Rider and Morbius—for the '70s-hungry Marvel kiddies.



Meanwhile, over in *The Amazing Spider-Man*, J. Jonah Jameson's astronaut son, John was making a blinding mistake. Taking a fancy to a pretty red rock on the moon's surface, Jameson brings the stone back to Earth and manages to elude NASA security so's he can craft it into a groovy necklace sure to make the gals fall at his feet. That sorta happens, but not in the way he wishes. As I'm sure you can tell by now from the title of this article, it grafts itself to his neck and transforms Jameson into Man-Wolf. He fights Spider-Man for two issues (#124 & #125) before Spidey rips the stone from Jameson's throat and chucks it into the Hudson River. Now, in real life, this would be the happy ending part, but, as anyone who reads comics can tell you, nobody is safe if sales warrant it. So, with the help of Morbius, the Living Vampire, Man-Wolf made his "triumphant return" in the pages of *Giant-Size Superheroes Starring Spider-Man* #1, wherein he again suffered humiliation at the hands of the web-slinger.

Meanwhile, *Creatures On The Loose*—once just another of Marvel's dozen or so reprint horror titles—had become at least an interesting experiment, one that showcased SF-Fantasy-Horror themed series during its 37-issue survival (including Thongor, King Kull, and Gullivar Jones, Warrior of Mars).² The advantage of these showcase titles (the superheroes had 'em too: *Marvel Two-In-One*, *Marvel Premiere*, *Marvel Feature*, etc.) was that the

the wolf, but by the second issue, when we find out who Sarnak is, and why he wants the wolf (would you believe that Sarnak works for a bunch of crooked billionaires and plans to use the wolf to scare the common man into buying more products and thus reinvigorate the economy? I didn't think you would.), he's blown his golden opportunity. Still, compared to the earlier issues, this is Will Eisner material.

JACK RUSSELL'S FINEST HOUR

In WWBN #9 and #10, Jack Russell is shadowed by a creepy misfit who doesn't talk much other than to mutter "Sarnak orders it," or as Jack Russell describes him: "...a stinking mold of a man, encrusted with slime and moss, reeking of dried wine and fouler smells." We still have to wade through the endless flashbacks and recounting of "our story thus far," but for half a storyline, we at least get something that dazzles, art-wise. That's thanks to artist

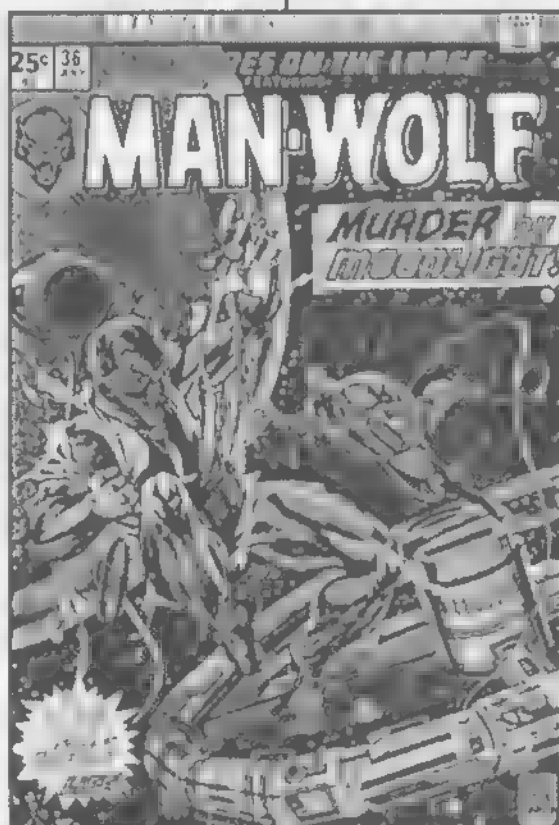
Tom Sutton, who filled in on WWBN for two issues, and in that short time showed all who had come before him what a werewolf looks like. Sutton's werewolf is a vicious beast (though still constrained by Marvel and the all-mighty code), one you wouldn't take to bed or feed a biscuit to. Now if only Sutton had written the damn thing as well!

Writer Gerry Conway comes up with an interesting hook in the creepy little monster stalking

the wolf, but by the second issue, when we find out who Sarnak is, and why he wants the wolf (would you believe that Sarnak works for a bunch of crooked billionaires and plans to use the wolf to scare the common man into buying more products and thus reinvigorate the economy? I didn't think you would.), he's blown his golden opportunity. Still, compared to the earlier issues, this is Will Eisner material.

company could take a risk since most of these titles had sales roughly those of Michael Avallone's novels. If the series being showcased, say *The Scarecrow*, bit the big one, well, they'd put something else in the next issue.³ If for some reason the issue sold like hotcakes, they'd give it another issue and if that one sold, chances were good that that series would get its own title (that happened with *The Defenders*, *Ghost Rider*, and *The Son Of Satan*, to name a few). Most of these mini-series lasted only a few issues.

Man-Wolf began his 8-issue solo run in *COTL* #30 (July, 1974), in an utterly boring, badly drawn waste of time titled "Full Moon, Dark Fear." It didn't take more than a few panels to realize that MW would have the same problems as his brother werewolf, Jack Russell. Marvel's werewolves don't



seem capable of real savagery, always stopping short of doing what comes natural to a beast—ripping and maiming. The only ripping and maiming in the first installment happens to that funky moon-suit Jameson is forced to wear to keep out the rays of the moon (it doesn't work too well). Man-Wolf spends most of his time during writer Doug Moench's stay at *Creatures On The Loose* destroying cars and fainting from fatigue. Moench *does* create an interesting supporting character, a CIA agent named Simon Stroud who, despite having the annoying habit of being drawn with his fists constantly clenched, almost acts like a real human being sometimes. George Tuska's art, while not nearly as bad as Perlin's, is not suited to a supernatural storyline. So far, so bad, right?

A Lycanthropic List

THE GREATEST WEREWOLF COMIC OF ALL TIME!

Titled simply "Werewolf", and published in the premiere issue of *Creepy* (early 1965), the story told of big-game hunter Biff Demmon (a dead ringer for Ernest Borgnine) who tracks the ultimate game in Africa. Frank Frazetta's breathtaking art overshadows Larry Ivie's script, which is essentially a reworking of *THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME*. The third panel of the 4th page is a classic piece of art, one that Warren would bring out many times over the years in either reprintings or ads. This would be Frazetta's only full length illustration work for Warren (though the artist would paint many more horrific covers). Ivie would serve a brief stint as editor of *Creepy* before going on to publish seven issues of his monster fanzine, *MONSTERS AND THINGS* (1967-70), a fascinating quirky 'zine that featured monsters, comics, and barbarians, and is now quite rare.

THE FUNNIEST WEREWOLF COMIC

Richard Corben, god of the large mammaries, wrote and illustrated "Lycanklutz," a goofy as all hell medieval horror-comedy. A brilliant wizard breeds a silver-fanged flea to do away with a pesky werewolf. When the wiz is double-crossed

by the king who hired him, he strikes a bargain with the wolfman. Published in color, this was the most hilarious story (intentional or otherwise) ever to appear in Warren's mags, with a final line that will leave you...howling

AND... THE LAMEST

Anyone who lived through comics in the '60s, in particular DC and the Superman line, knows that its hard to narrow down the lamest comics of the time. Luckily, this is a specialized column and I don't have to look any further than *Jimmy Olson* #104 (Aug., 1967). Back in those had-old-DC days of the 1960s, Jimmy would regularly "become" something he was not—a dog, a turtleboy, bald, twenty feet tall, sexually active, entertaining, witty, well-written—you get the idea. It was only a matter of time before Jimmy found himself transformed into a werewolf via a magic potion whose effects could only be reversed by the kiss of a fair maiden. These were the kind of stories that made serious comic fans turn their backs on DC and find something more intelligent...like Jerry Lewis movies

THE MOST SOPHISTICATED AND SUSPENSEFUL WEREWOLF COMIC

During Alan Moore's stint on (*Saga*

Of) *Swamp Thing*, Swampy (aka Alec Holland) ran across many interesting creatures in and out of the Louisiana bayous. In "The Curse" (#40, Sept., 1985), Holland is summoned to Maine by the mysterious John Constantine, where he happens upon a female werewolf ready to disembowel her domineering hubby. Those familiar with Moore's work (*Watchmen*, *V For Vendetta*, *Miracleman*) will know that there's going to be more to this story than just a pissed-off lycanthrope, but I won't go into all the deep stuff. I will say that artists Steve Bissette and John Totleben draw one mean werewolf. Jack Russell, John Jameson and Arty Lemming would turn and make tracks.

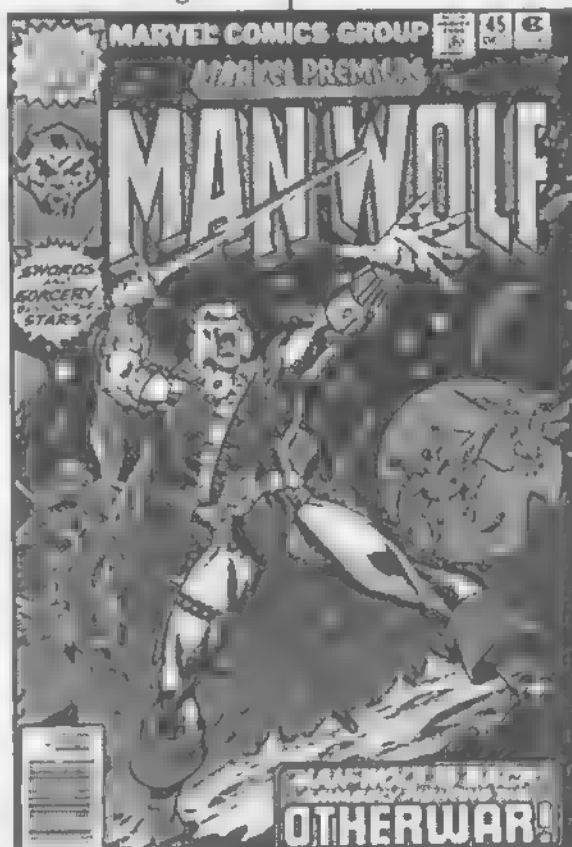
THE MOST "BERNI WRIGHTSON" WEREWOLF COMIC

While still a young man, Wrightson cemented his reputation as his generation's Ghastly Graham Ingels with his 10-issue run of *SWAMP THING* (1972-73). Swampy battled a gallery of monsters in those issues, among them a Frankenstein-like monster, ghouls, mad doctors, a hunchback, and, oh yeah, a werewolf. Wrightson has the uncanny ability of making anything frightening, even a seven-foot hunk of swamp mud.

The big change in Man-Wolf came with COTL #33, the first issue scripted by David Anthony Kraft (who would later create the fanzine, *Comics Interview*) and drawn by future fan favorite George Perez (of *The New Teen Titans* fame). While still retaining the trappings of comic book land (characters tend to say things like "lord help us" and "Can it"), Kraft was sending the Man-Wolf off into some interesting territories. After escaping from Stroud for the umpteenth time, Jameson holds up with some biker hippies who just happen to be living close to a canyon that coincidentally houses the underground complex of The Hate-Monger!!! (exclamations theirs) Ol' HM, fresh from humiliating defeat at the hands of Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D., intends to send a rocket up to an orbiting space station, man the station, and zap Earth with his "Universal Hate Ray." But Man-Wolf thwarts the Monger's plans and becomes quick chums with Nick Fury, who has arrived on the scene to mop up. Fury puts in a good word for Jameson, and in no time the Man-Wolf is on good terms with NASA. Good enough, in fact, to pilot a ship up to that aforementioned satellite. When he gets there, he meets up with all kinds of super-powered goons, all in search of the stone (now randomly referred to as the "moonstone," "weird-stone," and "godstone") grafted to John Jameson's throat.

That's about where Man-Wolf's story came to a close. Or so it would seem to anyone reading the special editorial in the last issue of COTL, a quick one-page wrap-up of some of the loose threads in #37, but nowhere near enough information to tell us where this character was going. Three years later, the story was picked up and presumably finished in the pages of *Marvel Premiere* #45-46 (Dec., 1978 - Feb., 1979). There's no indication, but my guess is that this wrap-up was actually finished in 1975, as I can't see Marvel re-assembling the original team just for Man-Wolf. Regardless of the circumstances, the two-issue wrap-up is not very satisfying. Jameson crash lands on the moon where he becomes a god to a band of badly dressed Charles Band-Sword and Sorcery Flick extras, and, like Jack Russell, suddenly acquires the gift of rational thought and speech (always a killer to these supernatural strips, believe me). The team of barbarians attires the Man-Wolf in a garb that could only be described as Green Arrow the Hairy Barbarian and talks the dopey monster into leading them into war with a crazed super-villain named Tyrk (yes, Tyrk), who

wishes to acquire the moon for himself (why the hell he'd want to do this is never really explained) and has taken Jameson's fiance hostage to ensure he gets his way. Needless to say, there's a happy ending and Jameson and his gal return to Earth presumably to get married and raise cubs.⁴ Skip these two issues and just pretend that Man-Wolf was lost in space forever. One thing's for sure—what *Werewolf By Night* couldn't come close to doing in 50 issues, Man-Wolf at least hinted at in only ten.



Correction time: Last issue, we discussed what I felt was one of the hidden gems of horror: Steve Skeates' Mummy series which appeared in *Eerie* magazine in the mid-'70s. I mentioned that Skeates was writing both *The Mummy* and *The Werewolf* series in *Eerie* at the same time. Well, that's not entirely true. He *did* write the final installment wherein *The Mummy* and *The Werewolf* merge into one being and set out on a journey of crazed shenanigans (detailed more graphically in our last issue), but the writer responsible for *The Werewolf* series' first five installments was Al Milgrom. Now this guy knows how to entertain.

Milgrom's Werewolf series ran in five non-consecutive issues of *Eerie* (#48-53, 1973-74), and differed in one aspect from Marvel's two werewolf series in that Arthur Lemming, Werewolf, wasn't constrained by the mighty hand of the

Comic Code Authority, and took advantage of that fact every chance he could. In the first installment, he's afflicted with the Curse of the Werewolf and eventually murders his own pre-teen daughter. Since he has no recollection of any of his transformations, he naturally pins the blame squarely on the shoulders of his adulterous wife, Angela, and heads off for the high country. There he meets a friendly band of sympathetic gypsies, falls in love with one of their womenfolk, and for good measure slaughters every one of them! As she lay dying, the head gypsy (played by Maria Ouspenskaya) slaps Lemming with the Curse of Memory. This fills Arty's head with all kinds of distress, but, as he muses, it at least reminds him that his wife is about to be burned at the stake by the constable for being a witch. Having an incredible change of heart, he heads back to his home town (Dwarves Bay) and rescues his wife just as she's getting the Richard Pryor treatment. As the final segment comes to a close, the reconciled lovebirds agree that their bad times are



behind them and that nothing but joy awaits them in the future. Then Arty turn into the werewolf and kills Angela. End of story. Well, sorta. That's when Skeates took over.

Though all three of these series vary in quality, they all share one startling fact: Werewolves go through a hell of a lot of shirts.

ENDNOTES

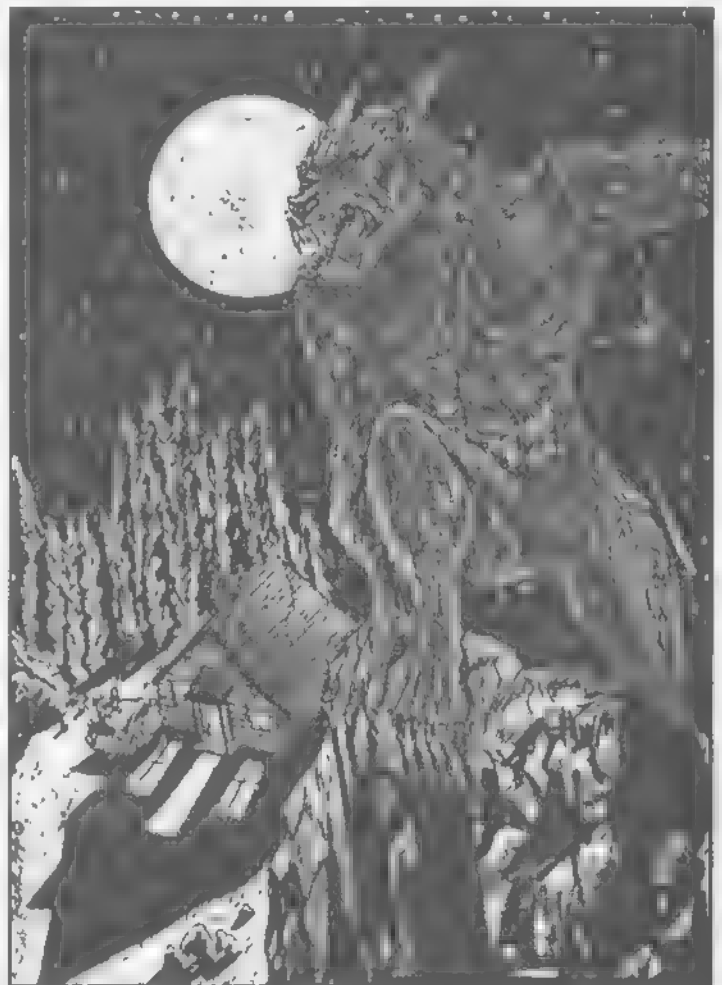
1. Wolfman more than redeemed himself in the early '80s with his writing on *Night Force*, a DC comic concerning a group of paranormals who investigate supernatural going-ons. Drawn by Gene Colan, who also teamed up with Wolfman on Marvel's now-legendary *Tomb Of Dracula*, *Night Force* displayed in its short 14-issue run how effective a horror comic could be. For more on Wolfman and his projects, stay tuned for *TSF* #19 (The Horror Comics Issue).

2. It should be mentioned that another of Marvel's reprint titles, *Fear*, quickly became the home of the excellent Man-Thing series before MT got its own title. *Fear* then showcased the goody adventures of Morbius.

3. It's too bad that *The Scarecrow* lasted only two scattered issues (in *Marvel Spotlight* #26 and *Dead Of Night* #11) as this was indeed something that might have blossomed

into a genuinely eerie project, based on the two installments published. He also co-starred in a wacky, but thoroughly enjoyable one-off called *The Legion Of Monsters* (in *Marvel Spotlight* #28) wherein CROW teamed up with Man-Thing, Ghost Rider and Morbius to defeat the "Living Mountain." Search this one out, true believers, it's a must-have.

4. One loose thread—the final panel of the final issue of *COTL*, only mentioned in passing in the *Premiere* issues, informing us that the stone is actually a parasite—was later used, ironically, in *Spider-Man*. During the infamous "Secret Wars," Spidey gets a new black costume, which he later discovers is symbiotic. As for the fate of Man-Wolf, he was cured of his disposition in a storyline spanning *Amazing Spider-Man* #189-191. Many thanks to Tom Brevoort for informing me, via America Online, of the whereabouts of John Jameson in later years.



!!! 50 WEREWOLVES 50 !!!

The following is a by-no-means-complete listing of other werewolves in the comics, but it will give you a good variety if you're in the mood to hunt them down. By the way, before a bunch of you growl foul, I've gotten some of these from reprint comics, and some of these books don't give original sources.



The Beast of the Full Moon
 Blood of the Werewolf
 By the Fright of the Silvery Moon
 The Carriage Man
 The Case of the Reluctant Werewolf
 A Change in the Moon
 The Choice
 The Claws of Death
 The Cold of the Uncaring Moon
 Concerto For Violin and Werewolf
 Curse of the Full Moon
 Curse of the Full Moon
 Curse of the Werewolf
 Curse of the Werewolf
 Daddy is a Werewolf
 Deadly Mark of the Beast
 The Devil Walks on Halloween
 The Hoax of Death
 Howling Success
 Little Red Riding Hood and the Werewolf
 A Little Stranger
 Majority of One
 The Man Who Cried Werewolf
 Monster Monster Rise From My Crypt
 No Silver Atoll
 Permanent Members
 Plague of the Wolf
 Prey For Me
 The Purge
 The Secret
 Spade, The Werewolf, and Me
 To Love, Honor, Cherish...Til Death
 Two Silver Bullets
 Upon Reflection
 Wardrobe of Monsters
 Way of the Werewolf
 The Werewolf Goes West
 The Werewolf Legend
 The Werewolf Must Kill
 The Werewolf of Wilmach
 The Werewolf Stalks
 The Werewolf Strikes
 Werewolf Tale to End All Werewolf Tales
 The Werewolf Within
 When I Was a Boy, I Watched the Blood Wolves
 Where Walks the Werewolf
 While the Cat's Away
 Who Toys With Terror
 Wolfbeat
 Wolf Hunt

Vault of Horror #17 Feb51
 Creepy #12 Dec66
 Tales From the Crypt #35 Apr53
 House of Mystery #227 Nov74
 Mr. Monster #1 Jan85
 Eerie #15 June68
 Vampirella #24 May73
 House of Mystery #224 May74
 Monsters Unleashed #3 Nov73
 Tales From the Crypt #42 July54
 Tales From the Crypt #17 Apr50
 Creepy #4 1965
 The Monster Times #8 May72
 House of Mystery #214 June73
 Creepy #127 May81
 Nightmare #1 Dec70
 Stark Terror #2 Feb71
 Crime Mysteries #10 Nov53
 Eerie #14 Apr68
 Weird #11 Apr66
 Haunt of Fear #14 Aug52
 Twisted Tales #5 Oct83
 Monsters Unleashed #1 1973
 Psycho #16 Jan74
 Haunt of Fear #23 Feb54
 Eerie #22 July69
 Vampirella #7 Sep70
 Vampirella #36 Sep74
 Vault of Horror #39 Nov54
 Haunt of Fear #24 Apr54
 Twisted Tales #9 Nov84
 Monsters Unleashed #4 Feb74
 Vampirella #1 Sep69
 Tales From the Crypt #46 Mar55
 Eerie #15 June68
 House of Mystery #231 May75
 The Monster Times #24 July73
 Vault of Horror #12 Apr50
 Silver Scream #3 Nov91
 Astonishing Tales #17
 Adv Into the Unknown #1 Fall48
 The Beyond #1 Nov50
 Monsters Unleashed #5 Apr74
 Nightmare #9 Oct72
 Nightmare #22 Oct74
 Creatures on the Loose #13
 Vault of Horror #34 Dec53
 Weird Tales of the Macabre #2 Mar75
 Eerie #8 Mar67
 Vampirella #74 Dec78



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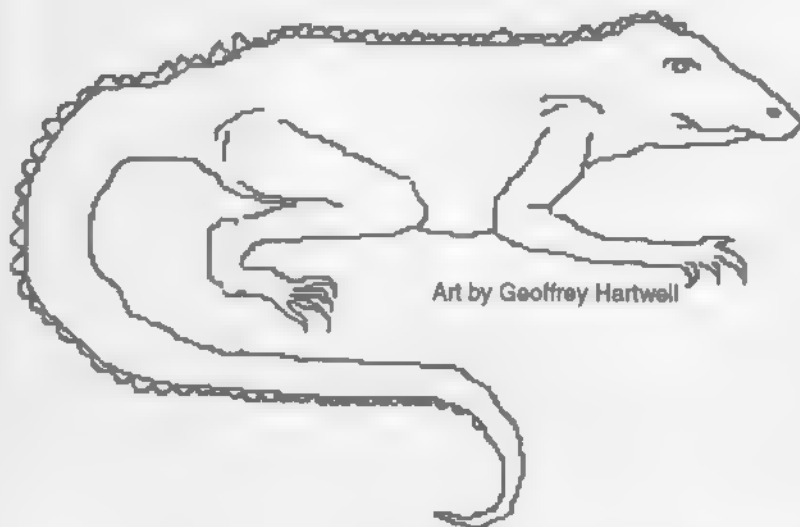
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What the hell
ever happened to...

Galad Elflandsson
&
Leslie Whitten?

by Bob Moulton

Welcome to the latest installment of *What The Hell Ever Happened To...?*, in which we track down authors who at one time achieved a certain degree of success and/or notoriety in the genre, but who have since faded from view (or at least from the genre).

Since there was no installment of *What The Hell...* in the last issue of *TSF*, we'll attempt to atone by tracking down not one, but two, authors this time around. And—since this is *TSF*'s special "all werewolves" issue—we've appropriately chosen two authors who have published werewolf novels in the past.

Our first subject is Galad Elflandsson, a Canadian writer who made a few appearances in the small press in the late '70s, went on to have his first novel, *The Black Wolf*, published by notable small press publisher Donald Grant, and later wrote a few stories for various Charles Grant-edited anthologies. Elflandsson's last story was published in 1988, and his sole published novel appeared almost ten years prior to that, leaving us with a fair amount of catching up to do with the author.

But let's begin at the beginning...before he had even had a single story published, Elflandsson submitted a collection of tales, tentatively titled *The Exile And Other Tales of Carcosa*, to Donald Grant in late 1977. One might find it strange that a beginning author would choose to submit his first book to a small press publisher, particularly someone like Grant, who in his pre-Stephen King days, was primarily doing Robert E. Howard reprints.

"The reason I submitted it to Donald Grant was simply because I was in a bookshop and saw one of his books. At that point, I was very new to [the field], and I look at the book and thought it was a nice piece of work and thought 'hmm, maybe I should try this publisher,' not realizing who it was I was targeting."

Most of the stories that the author included in his initial *Exile* submission would eventually appear in the small press, and, looking back on them now, Elflandsson is more than a little dubious about their quality. The collection was not purchased by Grant, and Elflandsson never submitted the collection to any other publisher.

However, amongst the stories in the collection was a

shorter version of *The Black Wolf*, which Grant liked so much that he asked Elflandsson to expand it for possible publication as a novel. Elflandsson complied, rewriting and lengthening the story in early 1978. "It really wasn't that much work," says the author, "it was only about 22,000 words to start with and I only added about 50% more to it."

Nonetheless, Grant was impressed with the result, and *The Black Wolf* was published in 1979, in both hard-cover and trade paperback editions.

In his introduction to *The Black Wolf*, Charles Collins discusses how the book came to be, and makes reference to the fact that the collection *The Exile* was more obviously influenced by Ambrose Bierce and Robert Chambers, while the revised *Black Wolf* is more Lovecraftian in tone, an opinion with which Elflandsson concurs. "Don's slant was a little more toward the Lovecraftian stuff, so I thought he might be more comfortable with that approach. I think he might even have suggested that I give it more of a Lovecraft slant."

The earlier Bierce and Chambers influences certainly make sense, since at the time that Elflandsson initially wrote the stories in *The Exile*, they were among his favorite authors.

"At that time, they were...My history with science fiction, fantasy, and horror began back when I was reading Edgar Rice Burroughs in the little Ace paperbacks in the late '50s and early '60s. But once I exhausted the Burroughs books, I pretty much stopped reading entirely, for maybe seven or eight years. And then, by chance I picked up a couple of anthologies—once of them was *The Spell Of Seven*, [edited] by L. Sprague de Camp—and after that I just sort of went hell-bent for leather, reading anything I could find. In the process, I discovered there was all this earlier material that *these* writers had gotten their inspiration from, so I decided to start at the beginning, and went back and read Gilgamesh and all that stuff. Basically worked my way up until I got up to Walpole and Beckford, writing the Gothic thrillers of the late 1700s, and basically gave myself a grand tour. I happened upon Bierce and Chambers, and 'The King In Yellow' at that point just fascinated me, because there

was so much unsaid about it. Chambers was sort of a dilettante writer, and he was basically just hanging out carrots for people. 'The King In Yellow' was one of the most marvelous things I'd ever read, because so much was left unsaid, there were so many holes left in the mythology. So I decided that I wanted to expand on it."

Despite Elflandsson's thorough steeping in the genre, he reads very little horror these days. "Almost none at all. I've pretty much gone through [the genre] to my satisfaction. I don't read a lot of fantasy, either, and only occasionally read mysteries. Having recently moved to [Arizona], it's opened up an entirely new world of reading material for me, and I'm pretty much focusing on regional historical stuff."

After *The Black Wolf* appeared in 1979, Elflandsson continued writing, albeit sporadically. "I puttered a lot. I didn't really hit stride until late '84. For about two years after that I was writing pretty regularly. I sold a couple of short stories to Charlie Grant for the anthologies that he was doing then, and wrote three novels as well, only one of which actually sold."

That novel, an adventure fantasy for young adults, sold to Ace, but after it had sat on Ace's shelves for almost three years, Elflandsson decided to pull the book.

"It was another of my sterling career choices. They phoned me up and asked for a three month extension on the contract, and I was so ticked off that they'd already let it sit for two-and-a-half years that I said 'forget it, I'd rather that it just collect dust like it has been. Send it back to me.' And I really haven't written anything since then."

Of the other two novels that Elflandsson wrote during that period, one was a detective novel with supernatural overtones and the other was an out-and-out horror novel. However, he never attempted to aggressively market them to publishers.

"I sent them out sort of tentatively. I didn't get a lot of positive feedback at that point. And after a couple of years of trying to write full time, and then Ace basically scuttling the whole thing for me—by taking the one book but then never even bothering to look at anything else—my bank balance zeroed out and writing just ceased to be fun. So I just stopped writing and everything that I wrote is just sitting here. I keep toying with the notion of polishing some of it up, but I just never have the time."

Although Donald Grant published Elflandsson's only book, the author has never really tried to place another book with Grant. "After *The Black Wolf* came out and I realized the magnitude of what I had done—getting him

to publish my first book, surely by chance, dealing from a position of ignorance as it were—I sort of felt like I would be imposing on him. He had a bunch of other projects that he was working on, and then the Stephen King [limited editions] came along and started making a lot of money for [Grant] and putting a lot of gray hairs on his head. So, while we did talk a little [about another Elflandsson book under the Grant imprint], we only did it in a roundabout way and I never actually submitted anything else to him."

The Black Wolf is also notable for the unusual and striking illustrations by Randy Broecker (whose work appeared in *TSF's* special *Night Of The Living Dead* issue).

Elflandsson admits to being quite taken by the illustrations himself.

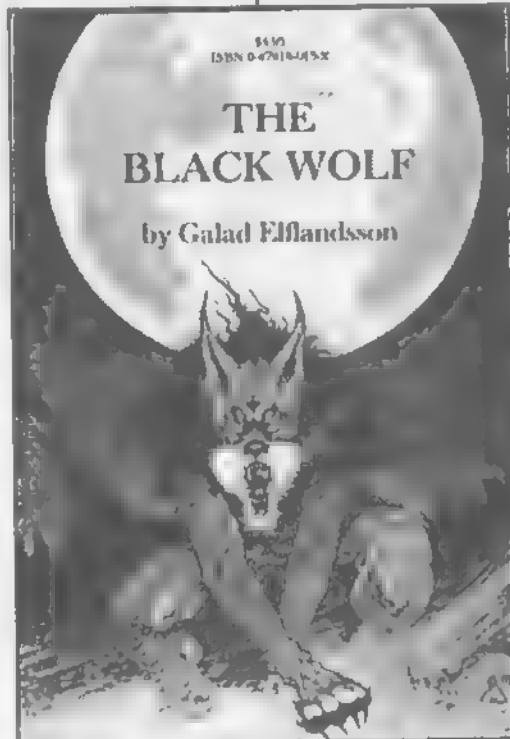
"To be quite honest, I didn't know what to think of them at first, because I'd never seen anything quite like them. In the end, I really liked them, because they did more justice to the story than it deserved. *The Black Wolf* was such a derivative story, but Randy's artwork for it was unique. I think the artwork was better than the story, quite honestly."

Coincidentally, not too long before we tracked down Elflandsson for this column, he was ferreted out by another unexpected source, as the author explains.

"About eight or nine years ago, Stephen Jones asked me if I wanted to do some odd poetry for this little volume that they were doing [*Now We Are Sick*]. They didn't have a publisher, they didn't have anything at the time, but it was a neat idea, so I wrote them a poem.

"The funny thing about it is...the book finally came out a few years ago, but I never knew about it. [When the book came out] I didn't have much to do with the horror and fantasy fields, and the people at Dreamhaven [the publishers] lost my address, and Steve Jones didn't have it anymore either, so they didn't know how to contact me. It was purely by chance that they found me, because when I moved to the Phoenix area, I sold a bunch of stuff off to a local bookseller, who in turn looked at his want list and found that somebody wanted one of the books that I had sold him, and that somebody worked at Dreamhaven. So...the guy at Dreamhaven was curious where the book had come from, got my name, and said 'wait a minute, we've been looking for this guy.'"

Speaking of Phoenix, Elflandsson is now running a bookstore in the area, having moved there two years ago from his native Canada, a move prompted by both the bleak Canadian economy and an accident suffered by the author's wife, with resulting injuries which made the



bone-chilling Canadian winters equally inhospitable. Given Elfransson's contentment with his new home and job, and his negative experiences with Ace, a return to fiction writing seems unlikely.

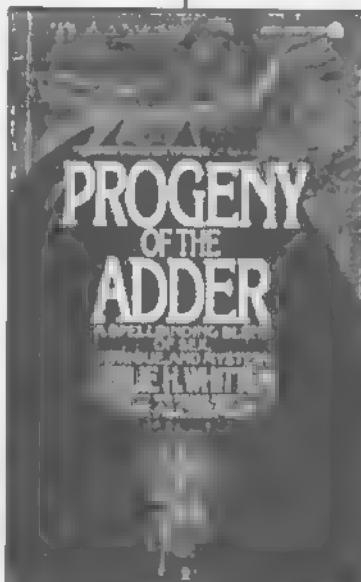
Our second subject is an author whose work in the horror genre dates back more than two decades. In the late 1960s and early '70s, Les Whitten published three novels of interest to genre fans—*Progeny Of The Adder*, *Moon Of The Wolf*, and *The Alchemist*. All achieved both critical and commercial success, but the author moved on to other topics and—until recently—hasn't looked back.

Both *Progeny* and *Moon* have remained popular over the years, each appearing in three different paperback editions, the most recent being an omnibus edition of the two from Leisure Books. The success of that book led Leisure to ask Whitten if he had any other genre material that they could team with *The Alchemist* in a similar omnibus style volume. To which Whitten replied: "Well, I've got this 25-year old movie treatment that I did for ABC that I kept the literary rights to." Leisure asked to see the movie treatment, liked it, and according to Whitten, said "convert this to a novel—la and we'll bring it out with *The Alchemist*." Thus was born Whitten's first contribution to the genre in over two decades, the novella *The Fangs Of Morning*, which should be out—bound together with *The Alchemist*—from Leisure shortly after you read this.

Although the werewolf tale *Moon Of The Wolf* is certainly the most apropos of Whitten's output to discuss for this issue of *TSF*, it's *Progeny Of The Adder* which has generated the greatest acclaim for the author. For example, listen to what David Schow had to say about the book in the anthology *A Whisper Of Blood*.

"From punk vampires to porn vampires to gay vampires to vampirism-as-AIDS, vampire fiction has become conventional, a category unto itself. As a genre it is by and large ultraconservative, moribund, demographic, derivative, totally safe, and utterly dull, dull, dull. Grave wavers who wet themselves over today's endlessly recycled bloodsucker might do well to exhume and rediscover the only two fundamental American vampire novels of this century—Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* and Les Whitten's *Progeny Of The Adder*. From them sprang, ultimately, the entire culture of pop vampirism as we know it today."

High praise, indeed—especially for an author's first novel! Whitten explains how



he came to write his vampiric masterpiece.

"What led me to write [*Progeny*] was...I had recently read Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and I thought 'this is one helluva book.' It's just a wonderful novel. And after reading Stoker, I was really curious about where he'd gotten these ideas, so I went down and read everything in the Library of Congress about vampires. And it was on that basis that I wrote the novel."

At that time, Whitten was writing for *The Washington Post*, where some of his work entailed interaction with the local police. "I knew a really great homicide detective there, and I made him the hero—with a different name—of the novel. The [real-life] detective wasn't terribly well-educated, and he wasn't brilliant, but he was very dogged, and he was a very decent

man. His character in the novel, not knowing what it is that he has on his hands, goes to the Library of Congress and reads everything he can find on the subject of vampires, and he realizes that what he has is either a vampire or someone who thinks he's a vampire. He uses the 17th century admonitions of how to deal with a vampire against this creature, and finally realizes that he's dealing with a real vampire."

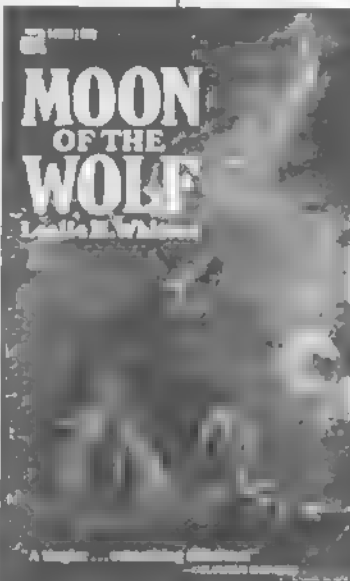
Some of the research that Whitten performed for *Progeny* has clearly left an indelible impression on him, especially since, as he puts it "I was raised a Protestant—against my will..."

"The vampire is, in fact, an embodiment of the anti-Christ. For example, the cross symbolism is obvious, and the stake [the vampire's nemesis] is made of Ash, which is supposedly what the cross was made of. The vampire can't cross water and of course Christ walked on water. The vampire is often portrayed as being 40 days underground before he pops up, and Christ supposedly walked 40 days before he got into heaven. You can vanquish a vampire by putting holy wafers around his coffin lid, or by putting briar roses around it—the briar roses being symbolic of a crown of thorns. I found one thing after another indicating that those who put forward the vampire myth were really relating it to Christianity."

For a while, it looked like there may be a cinematic version of *Progeny*, but Whitten's creation never made it to the screen—or did it?

"I sold the movie rights but they never made the movie. It later seemed to have been parodied—at least according to one newspaper—by [the made-for-TV movie] *The Night Stalker*...and I do think that movie was awfully close to my plot."

In the course of doing his extensive



research for *Progeny*, Whitten came across a great deal of material on werewolves as well. "I thought 'geeze, I've got all this damned research material, why don't I just write a werewolf novel?' So *Moon Of The Wolf* was really a by-product of my vampire novel."

Set in the Mississippi delta, *Moon* involves a community that's suddenly beset by several violent killings, the lawman who investigates the deaths, and a local wealthy family that seems to somehow be involved. The book was generally very well-received, but there were exceptions, as the author notes.

"The *New York Times*, when they reviewed [*Progeny*], said 'oh this is the most wonderful book anybody ever wrote about vampires, blah, blah, blah.' So I thought I was really going to get a great review of *Moon Of The Wolf*. Well, the same reviewer who thought *Progeny* was so great said that *Moon Of The Wolf* was a 'museum of clichés.' He may have been right, but the book is still selling long after he's dead." [laughs]

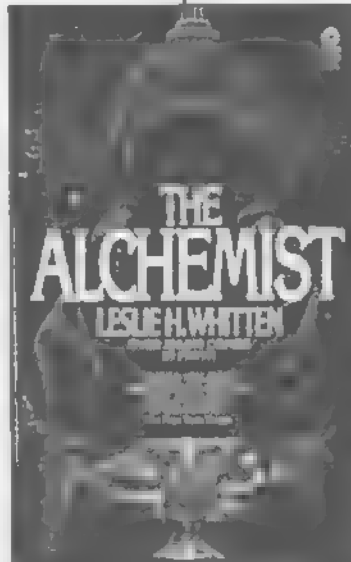
After *Moon Of The Wolf*, Whitten left the genre to write a mainstream novel, *Pinion*, *The Golden Eagle*, and a non-fiction book on famed attorney F. Lee Bailey.

"I was just outraged about how people were shooting golden eagles, and I wrote *Pinion* because of that." The Bailey book, meanwhile, grew out of Whitten's "day job" at the time as an investigative reporter for the Hearst Newspaper Group. "Hearst wanted a series of articles on Lee Bailey, and...Hearst owns Avon Books, and so Avon said 'if you're doing a series on Bailey, why don't you turn the series into an instant book for us?' That's how I came to write the Bailey book—it was really just part of my work."

Whitten's next book, *The Alchemist*, grew out of a great deal of research that the author had done in the area of black magic, along with extensive political reporting that he was doing at the time. Whitten describes the book thusly:

"It's about a somewhat timid government lawyer who, as a hobby, starts building an alchemical furnace, which is also called an athanor. In fact...an athanor is supposed to turn lead into gold, and when I incorporated a few years back, I called my company Athanor, Inc., thinking that my leaden novels might turn into gold! [laughs]

"Anyway, the lawyer's wife has left him for a much more brash, interesting man, and the lawyer is down in his basement, farting around, building an alchemical furnace. He knows it won't turn lead into gold, but it's a hobby. Through a fluke, he does a favor for a Deputy Cabinet secretary, a beautiful woman named Anita, and they become lovers. She's heavily into black magic, and her "real" boyfriend is also into black magic...The whole thing is based on the Faust myth."



After the publication and success of *The Alchemist*, Whitten gave up his newspaper job and became a full-time novelist. "That book liberated me, in a sense, because an editor at Doubleday, who saw and liked [*The Alchemist*] before Charter House bought it, was determined to publish a book by me. So Doubleday wound up buying my [next novel] *Conflict Of Interest*, and the paperback rights to that damned book wound up selling for \$360,000 to Bantam."

The proceeds from that sale allowed Whitten to give up his newspaper job—which by that time had grown into a partnership with famed Washington columnist Jack Anderson. "I loved Jack, he was very good to me. I gave him three months' notice and told him that I wanted to try writing novels for a living. So he said 'I had

hoped you would stay, but...if you can't cut it [as a full-time novelist], and you want to come back, then if you promise never to leave again, you can have back the by-line.' He was just wonderful about it. I still see him; he's still very dear to me."

At the same time that Whitten left his newspaper job, he left behind the supernatural motifs featured in three of his first four novels. "I left behind the arcane stuff with *The Alchemist*, and went on to political novels. In other words, *The Alchemist* was an arcana/political novel, and I just shed the arcana aspect and began writing political novels.

"A lot of people told me that I should have kept my character from *Progeny Of The Adder* and written a series of books around him, but...I strayed from the field. Since I wrote *The Alchemist*, I haven't read any horror novels or seen any horror films...In fact, until I wrote this new novella—*The Fangs of Morning*—I've been away from the field for a long, long time."

In addition to *The Fangs of Morning*, Whitten has been in the last couple of years working on two other novels, both of which represent something of a departure for him.

"I don't know that I'm shallow, but I think my writing has been. So, I've tried to write two very serious novels, and I don't know if they'll sell [to publishers] or not."

The first of these two novels has been submitted to several publishers without success, and is currently being re-written. The second, more recent, novel has garnered more enthusiasm from Whitten's agent, but has also not sold yet.

Given the so-far lukewarm response received by the author's two recent "serious" novels, and the continuing sales of his horror genre work, would he consider doing more work in the field?

"Only if it were a really strange damned book. I don't think I want to write about vampires; I don't know what I'd write about. It's conceivable, but it's not likely."

Horror fans can always hope...

Galad Elflandsson Fiction Checklist

(chronological)

- "Nightfear" in *Dark Fantasy* #15, January, 1978
"How Darkness Came to Carcosa" in *Dragonbane*, Spring, 1978
"The Virgins of Po" in *Copper Toadstool* #4, May, 1978
"The Piper of Dray" in *Copper Toadstool* #4, May, 1978
"A Tapestry of Dreams" in *Beyond The Fields We Know*, Autumn, 1978
"The Basilisk" in *Copper Toadstool* #5, January, 1979
"The Valley of the Sorrows" in *Heroic Fantasy* (DAW, 1979)
"The Hand of the King" in *Dark Fantasy* #12, April, 1979
"Snowbound in Glimmerwhite Hall" in *Copper Toadstool* #6/7, July, 1979
"The Last Wish of Ivar Magnusson" in *Valhalla* #1, August, 1979
The Black Wolf (Donald Grant, 1979)
"The Dance" in *Prelude To Fantasy* #2, Autumn, 1979
"The Answer" in *Stardock* #4, Fall, 1979
"The Exile" in *Gothic* #2, December, 1979
"The Flat on Rue Chambord" in *Dark Fantasy* #22, March, 1980
"Night Rider on a Pale Horse" in *The Phoenix Tree* (Avon, 1980)
"The Way of Wizards" in *Dragonfields*, Autumn, 1980
"An Act of Faith" in *Hecate's Cauldron* (DAW, 1982)
"Hitch-hiker" in *Stardock* #5, October, 1984
"The Reaver's Curse" in *Borderland* #1, October, 1984
"Something in a Song" in *Greystone Bay* (TOR, 1985)
"The Devil Don't Dance With Strangers" in *After Midnight* (TOR, 1986)
"Waiting" in *Borderland* #4, May, 1986
"Icarus" in *Shadows 9* (Doubleday, 1986; Berkley, 1988)
"The Last Time I Saw Harris" in *Shadows 9* (Doubleday, 1988; Berkley, 1988)
"An Overruling Passion" in *Doom City* (TOR, 1987)



Les Whitten Horror Fiction Checklist

(chronological; lists first paperback printing only)

- Progeny Of The Adder* (Doubleday, 1965; Ace, 1966)
Moon Of The Wolf (Doubleday, 1967; Ace, 1968)
The Alchemist (Charter House, 1973; Avon, 1974)

Other books by Whitten:

- Pinion, The Golden Eagle* (1968)
F. Lee Bailey (1971)
Conflict Of Interest (1976)
Sometimes A Hero (1979)
A Washington Cycle (1979)
A Killing Pace (1983)
A Day Without Sunshine (1985)
The Last Disciple (1989)

Derleth's Lament To Love

by Sam Moskowitz

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There were many things to remember at the 10th World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago in 1952—it was the largest and most impressive convention up to its time, with a record number of celebrities, including Hugo Gernsback as guest of honor, but the one piece of information that had the greatest impact of all on me occurred at the banquet held the evening of August 31, 1952. I was seated a table away from August W. Derleth, making one of his rare appearances at a science fiction affair, and he had just completed four ice cream parfaits topped with peppermint sauce, and was wiping some of the drippings from his tuxedo when he gestured me over.

I had visited him at Sauk City in 1948, together with David and Celia Keller (at which time a loan of desperately needed cash may have saved Arkham House from bankruptcy). He thanked me for my assistance in expediting the loan from Keller, then abruptly blurted out: "I'm getting married!" He paused for effect. Then without waiting for congratulations added: "She's fifteen years old!" That staggered me. Derleth was at the time 43 years of age, probably close to 250 pounds in weight. Because of his size and (at the time) unhealthy looking appearance, he appeared much older than his chronological age.

I was too discreet and surprised to inquire about details, but the match seemed incongruous, not only because of the age difference, but from the standpoint of what could they have in common. Derleth was entering middle age, he was a nationally prominent author and the dean of the specialty fantasy publishers with Arkham House. At fifteen, his fiancée must still be in high school.

I came to find that they had been engaged in December, 1951, on Christmas Day. They met at high school basketball games and at a school dance. Derleth also used to have high school students over to his home, "The Place of the Hawks," for jitterbug sessions. *The Milwaukee Journal* for January 10, 1953 headlined "Girl 16 Says 'Yes' to Derleth." They were married April 6, 1953, at St. Aloysius Catholic Church with Father Sylvester Van Berkel officiating. It was a Sauk City "event," with 500 turning out for the wedding, including the girl's parents Mr. & Mrs. Millard Winter from Freeport, Illinois, approving the marriage of their daughter Sandra.

There were two children from the union: April, born August 9, 1954; and Walden, born August 22, 1956. The marriage did not endure, the couple being divorced March 23, 1959, with Derleth in letters to business associates implying indiscretions, and the court awarded him

custody of the two children. He induced his mother and father to come live with him and help him raise the children. Sandra re-married and remained in the area.

During the entire period of his marriage, Derleth's financial condition was precarious. It wasn't until 1955 that he paid off accumulated debts to his printer, although he had issued primarily very modest editions of new titles, a number of which were paid for by the authors. His objective was to whittle away at his home mortgage, which was still substantial for the era.

Ten years before his marriage, Derleth had been engaged to a woman who in age and background seemed a more logical candidate for matrimony than the teenager he eventually selected. The woman was Marcia Lee Masters Jennings, daughter of the renowned poet Edgar Lee Masters, author of *The Spoon River Anthology* (1915). She had been married before and had a daughter 11 years old named Marcia Louise, and she also was a poet (*The Gurner on the Merchant Ship*) and had written a juvenile book, *Gradparp Flew In*. Her engagement to Derleth had been announced in *The Milwaukee Journal* for September 17, 1943, but was short-lived for reasons not made public. Derleth remained on a friendly basis with her father, visiting him several times, and on their last meeting offered to return a unique cane which was a family heirloom that Marcia had given him during their engagement.

Marriage to her would have enhanced Derleth's literary social standing, but it never took place. Which logically raises the question of what circumstances caused Derleth to later venture into marriage with a teen-age girl?

The answer can be found in his own tales of the people of Sauk City, and is not subtle or obscure but poignantly direct.

When Derleth was 15, he attended high school in Sauk City with a 15-year-old girl who he later repeatedly referred to as "Margery Estabrook," though that was unquestionably not a name to be found in the predominantly German village in 1924. From his stories and the descriptions of his friend and collaborator Mark Schorer, the girl was about as tall as Derleth himself, slim, blonde, with hair fashioned in braids and coiled above the top of her head. She walked with an unusual gait with her hips projected forward. In personality, she tended towards shyness and was the product of a Lutheran family.

Derleth wrote predominantly two classes of short stories. The type that readers of the supernatural identified with him were weird tales of horror. The others were

realistic stories of the lives of people that he lived with in Sauk City. In this latter grouping of stories, the girl Margery appears so often that she might almost be classified as a series character.

She makes an appearance with other thinly disguised Derleth friends and acquaintances in "Design In Circles" (*Phenix III*, January, 1937), wherein Margery is included along with two other girls Derleth had known, and she had appeared much earlier in "Confessions" (*The Quarter*, March, 1932), when he refers to their companionship in evenings. But neither compared to the outpouring and admission of youthful grief that was almost the total content of "Good-Bye, Margery" (*American Prefaces III*, November, 1937). In this vignette, he meets Margery and she tells him she is going out with another boy, Orin, and that it would be best if they did not see one another any more. She has been under constant pressure from her Lutheran parents to stay away from Derleth, because he is Catholic. Derleth has been under equal pressure from his mother to stop seeing the girl because she is Lutheran.

In the piece, Derleth attributes to his grandfather the summing up of him: "He will be a rational man, but perhaps never happy," and Derleth adds to that "as if he could know how it is to feel the quiet, eternal loneliness of streetlights and wind, and trees at night, as if he could know that to be rational is to be alone."

The importance Derleth attributed to "Good-Bye, Margery" may be underscored by that fact he made it the first story in his collection of short stories *Country Growth* (1940).

Derleth placed his next story about Margery in the prestigious *Coronet* (December, 1938). Titled "Girl In Time Lost," it told of the fierce love Derleth (named Steve Grendon for the sake of the story) and Margery had for one another. How, at first, they met in secret, either at the old Park Hall or hidden by the branches of a birch tree on a hill. In the story, he said that his friend Mark Schorer (named Robin in the story) and his girlfriend, named Helen, began to accompany them everywhere, and even when he beat Robin with his fists they would not stop following them around. This lack of privacy added to the insistent berating of their parents, and gradually wore them down until they separated. Margery married another, had children. On occasion they met and made small talk, but the girl he once knew seemed lost in time. Still, Derleth insisted

"yet, somewhere in her there must still be a spectre of that earlier Margery, somewhere still the young girl with the braided hair and the deep blue eyes, somewhere yet that wild loneliness that

held us together in those first years, wing-clipped now and caged, but still there."

Whether this version of their break-up is completely accurate, only Derleth knew. Mark Schorer was his close friend, but did he follow him everywhere and refuse to stop even when beaten?

One thing seems certain. The break-up *did* happen and Derleth *did* love her, as he concluded his account: "All time stands between us now: time lost, time past, time gone: and I wonder, when I pause to speak to her on Main Street, into what pocket of time she put the girl I loved." With "Girl In Time Lost," Derleth closed his short story volume *Country Growth*.

But those stories were only prelude. The great explosion of passion, nostalgia, sorrow and loss was to occur in 1941, when Charles Scribner, Derleth's publisher, issued *Evening in Spring*, a full-length novel built entirely around his teen-age love affair with the girl he called Margery.

The book starts with their first secret date, with both of them 15 years of age. It consists of a walk through the park. The situation that will eventually break up Derleth's first love is set in that opening chapter:

"Mother'll be wild if she finds out," she said.

"What's the matter with her?"

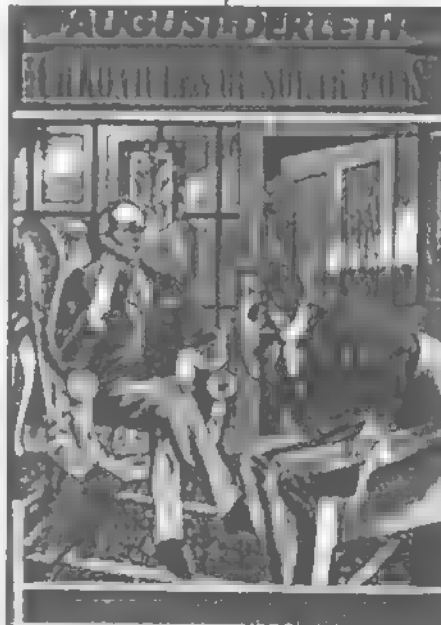
"She hates all Catholics, and if she found out I was with you..."

Following that first date the two met often, sometimes night after night, usually at Park Hall. It went on for some time until the two were sighted by one of Derleth's aunts and she carried the information back to his parents. They considered it a disgrace that he would go out with a "non-Catholic" girl. From that moment on, every time Derleth leaves the house or comes home late, he is open to suspicion.

On Margery's part, she had to use the pretext of going over to see her girl friend Norma to cover for her frequent trysts with Derleth, and often her girl friend would actually call and ask if Margery could go out with her. They would then meet Derleth and separate.

There was a movie theater in town, called *The Electric Theatre*, that was open two nights a week. There were no talking pictures in those days so Derleth would keep a seat open for Margery directly in front of him, and when she sat down there they would whisper to one another throughout the show, annoying some. Sometimes he would kiss the back of her neck, unseen in the darkness.

One day Margery's mother visited Derleth's mother and told her that her



son had been spotted by a witness performing a sex act on her daughter. It was untrue unless passionate kissing filled the bill, but young Derleth faced an interrogation when he got home from school.

Derleth comes face to face with his Aunt May on the subject of Margery. He meets Margery's father in the street, who tells him in no uncertain terms to stay away from his daughter.

Margery's mother comes over again. His grandfather speaks to him about the matter. His school teacher seems involved. His friends broach the matter to him every time he sees them. The entire situation becomes a perpetual nightmare, but he is in love.

Whether it is a family social affair, a village outing or just a walk through the village at night, thoughts of Margery are pervasive, and the hope of settling the dilemma in his favor becomes irresolvable.

There are segments of a variety of previously written pieces and sections that will be reconstructed into short stories in the future in *Evening In Spring*. But it ends with the vignette "Good-Bye Margery."

The novel is not just a nostalgic work of a man sentimentally remembering his past. It is not an objective relation of the course of early teen-age love. It is a *reliving* of an experience by a mature man suffering with renewed and fresh agony the most painful emotional experience of his life. The wounds are still raw. The sense of loss unreconciled. So much so that one has to believe that the Margery from "time lost" remains not only the strongest but the *only* love of Derleth's life, despite the fact that the secret trysts were over by the time he was 16 and he wrote this book at 33.

Such a situation is not uncommon. Some people live their entire lives with the memory of early, unrequited love burning like the perpetual flame, even through successful marriage and a fulfilled life, to the end of their days.

But *Evening in Spring*, probably the most favorably reviewed of all Derleth's books, was not to be the final catharsis of his obsession. The sections where the young Derleth, disguised as Steven Grendon, fights his parents, relatives, school, and Margery's parents in defending his relationship, reads like an adolescent, not an emotionally mature man. I don't think it was a writer's device. I believe that Derleth was throughout his life, despite his mental achievements, emotionally immature.

The March, 1941 issue of *Coronet* contained his short piece "Kleine Nachtmusik," not to be confused with a poem he wrote with the identical title. Once again, with a sense of infinite loss, he recounts the story of Steve Grendon and Margery Estabrook.

"Sometimes on Spring nights," he opened, "ghosts walk; a girl, a boy, one instant seen, lost in the next; and something there is about the way they haunt the shadowed moonlit dark that reaches deep into the well of darkness that is past time, time gone: these two, whose way is old, the echoes of whose voices

touch memory as lamplight warms a long-closed room—something there is that stirs the pool of time."

The story ends:

"In October it was gone, the little world was gone, lost in time past, time gone; and the years went over. Margery was married, a stranger to me now, and sometimes I see her, speak to her casually in passing: small words, trivial words—all time stands between us now, time and the intangibles of time...But something lingers here: the revenant of Margery, walking still there in the secret dark under the moon, and that other at her side: we two, unchanged, as always there in the dark, the slim, forever young bodies walking arm in arm in an eternal ecstasy of love, a never-ending beauty of first love: seen once again, seen for one magic moment around a secret corner of the mind, and something there is that touches once again that wild boy's heart, something that brings once more the brave unspoken words and holds them briefly, fleetingly there in the shaken throat."

He still held those views when he published under the imprint of Stanton & Lee (his own) another short story collection, *Sac Prairie People*, and led the book off with that story. That was in 1948. He had turned 40 by then.

But he closed the book with another poignant sketch of Margery, "I Was Walking Helen Back Home," which originally appeared in *The Prairie Schooner* for Summer, 1947. In this sketch, Derleth is walking a girl named Helen (it is not clear whether she is a date or just an acquaintance) through the same park and past the Park Hall where he had so often walked Margery. They are making small talk, when he asks her to stop a moment. Then, flooding back on him comes the memories of his evenings with Margery. He writes:

"The boy and girl who had lived their little ecstasy in this streetlight-shadowed darkness, lingered for all those years waiting for a moment like this, a night like this, the air sweet with oak-leaf pungence, and the sound of acorns falling to the roof of the stand, and the wind's keening in the trees.

"An uncounted second in time—the old agony renewed once again, the ancient bitterness like a vengeful phantom returning...Where I walked at Helen's side now, I could not turn, could not look back, lest I see in the darkness there the tangible spectre of that terrible loneliness, like a tenuous creature of no substance, a night-gaunt fleet as the wind and bound to me, humble but tenacious, a creature in my image, with my own familiar face, an entity lying forever in wait in the secret pockets of the heart."

Sandwiched in *Sac Prairie People* was "Valse Oubliée," which originally appeared in *The University Review* for Winter, 1944. Once again Derleth remembers an episode from the past with Margery, when he had bought her a bottle of lilac perfume to give her at a school Christmas party, 20 years earlier (1924). Everyone had picked names out of a box, but Derleth had contrived to fold his and Margery's slips of paper so that each would recognize and "select" them. But suddenly, the unanticipated. A friend

of Derleth's, Matt, arrives and sorrowfully explains there was no way in the world he could obtain a quarter to buy a present for the girl he has picked. Derleth gives him the lilac perfume, but then is confronted with the problem of explaining to Margery why he does not have a gift for her. He lamely tells her he has left it home, and will bring it tomorrow, in the meantime substituting a wrapped copy of a book of Sherlock Holmes stories from his desk, but he makes the mistake of not realizing that the label with her name on it is from the perfume, and the question lingers in her mind: how did he arrive with the label and forget the gift? He realizes there are some things for which you accept the doubt and don't explain. It is Christmas and there is snow again and he recalls:

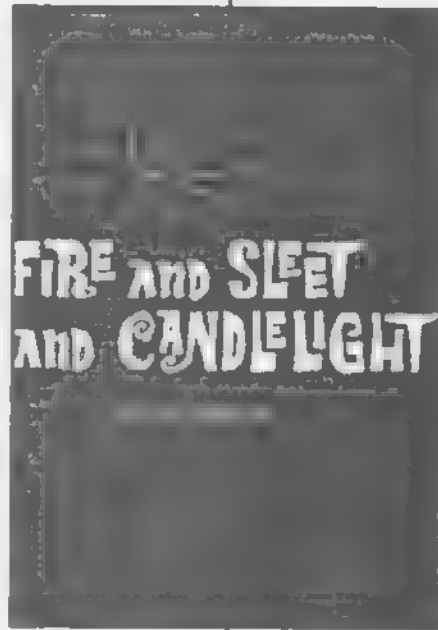
"And snow on the pane as it was that night, snow like the snow of that night, to be melted by some sun as that snow was, as years wore down the love between us and hid Margery away in a pocket of time beyond reach save for unheralded seconds like this."

Lest anyone imagine for a moment that Margery was a fictional character out of Derleth's imagination, his closest friend, Mark Schorer, in his collection of essays and short stories *Pieces of Life* (1977), destroys any such interpretation as he confirms in detail the teen-age secret meetings of Derleth and Margery, even duplicating the description of the girl. He introduces us to a fact about Margery which Derleth did not touch upon in his stories when he states:

"When she was a senior in high school (after she had broken up with Derleth), Margery was, it seems, easily seduced by the high school coach, a young, dark, very sexy-seeming fellow in the then macho style, and Augie, who was no doubt deeply hurt, reviled her as a slut. Later, however, when he wrote his first novel, he softened that crushing experience in a curious way, probably lessening, or trying to, his own pain...I think that by the time Aug got around to writing *Evening in Spring*, he had probably got round to putting down his pain."

Nowhere does Derleth allude to this in all his stories of Margery, unless, one construes the fact that he refuses to listen to an account of Margery on a date with Orin from one of his friends as referring to an incident of that sort.

There were other uncollected stories in which Margery figured: "Pavane" (*Stag*, February, 1942) and "The Tree" (*Decade III*, March/April, 1942) and there would be more later, all totaling an obsession which forced him to write on the theme whenever memory distracted his



mind from other work. Often the incidents he dealt with would be repetitious, as though Derleth was re-examining the past over and over again, trying to reaffirm that the result was inevitable.

In view of the foregoing, his seemingly unexplainable fixation on a fifteen-year-old high school girl while he was in his forties becomes clearer. Here, a highly sensitive man—as expressed by his fiction, non-fiction and poetry—is introduced to a friendly 15-year-old girl at a high-school event. Perhaps in some features she resembles Margery. Abruptly, through some magic, he sees a second chance to resolve the hopeless dilemma of his youth. Perhaps in his mind he is 15 years old again. Margery, and his short-lived romance with her, has never been out of his mind for the

past 26 years. All the elements of this encounter are not known, but evidently, the biggest obstacle of all, religion, is no longer a factor, for they will have a Catholic wedding in a Catholic church and any objections or reservations by her parents are not on record, and if his aging parents had any, they are in no position to influence a mature, successful and stubborn son.

The marriage lasted less than six years and concerning the divorce, Derleth wrote to Frances Dudley (then the heir to the William Hope Hodgson estate) in North Devon, England:

"I am well rid of my wife and greatly relieved to be free of her. Indeed, my health has improved in the two months since my divorce (he wrote June 4, 1949) decree was handed down, my blood pressure has returned to normal, and I am free of the tensions I knew during the six years of our marriage, when I hoped that my young wife would accept the challenge of respectability and saw that she was steadily retreating. I know that she is already regretting her folly, but there will be no reconciliation, since I will not have her back in any circumstances, not even for the sake of the children, who are surely better off without her and her bad influence. My mother, at 72, is rising splendidly to the challenge of being needed, being useful, and so is my father at 76. Fortunately, my own energy seems not to flag; I am only 50, and still capable of working long hours, if I can hold out another 15 years, I will be satisfied to have seen the children through the most trying years, for April Rose will then be 20 and Walden William 18—and if the children inherit anything of my temperament, they will be quite well adjusted and ready for maturity by that time. My parents care for the children by day, and I undertake their care by night, so that they may have their sleep uninterrupted. Fortunately, however, the children do not need a great deal of nocturnal care—only the comforting after nightmares and their occasionally getting up, and my daughter will be beginning kindergarten, and opening up a new world

in September, as her sixth year begins."

In balance, it must be quickly countered, that ever since boyhood, August William Derleth had proven a difficult man to live with. Frequently he was arrogant, egotistical and bullying, not to mention extremely opinionated. He worked at his typewriter incessantly, and his idea of recreation was a strenuous search for Morel mushrooms in the woods and fields surrounding Sauk City. He had a monumental appetite and did not exercise weight control, even though his work was sedentary.

His wife, with only a high school education, could hardly have appreciated his range of interests and was young to be burdened with two children. She would marry again, this time a lawyer, and take up residence in nearby Madison, Wisconsin.

During the course of the marriage, the idealized vision of Margery persisted. A new short story about Margery titled "The Boundary of Now" by Derleth appeared in *Creative Wisconsin* in 1957. In this story, a girl—Winifred from London—briefly visits Sauk City and is befriended by Derleth. Margery is away, but she has written him a letter which he carries around in his pocket. He shows her around his uncle's farm, and when she leaves, she gives him a kiss of appreciation. That kiss overwhelms him with a sense of guilt as strong as that felt by a married man with a good marriage who has committed adultery for the first time. "I knew no matter when I went back to Sac Prairie, it would never be quite the same again," he wrote. "Always, beyond Margery, beyond Sac Prairie, there would be somewhere on the rim of a far horizon a girl with flaxen hair and grey eyes who had once kissed me."

The following year in *Literary Review*, No. 2, 1958, Derleth would have "The Christmas Virgin," a short story constructed out of a chapter in *Evening in Spring*. In this story he remembers a Christmas decades past, when Margery had played the Virgin Mary in a church play. He had watched her with pride, and after the play they kissed, but her parents were waiting for her, and their encounter was brief. The sight of a repeated tableau of the virgin Mary, the Christ child and Joseph, with the wise man standing about, in the same church restores the memory of that early love. Then he states: "I thought of how the years wore down the fragile love between us and hid Margery away forever save for moments like this, unforeseen, unknown, and I felt again all the lost hope, all the despair, all the bitter, disappointment of the boy who stood there that night watching his first girl running down the street away from him toward the house with the porch-light where her parents waited; and it was as if somewhere along that street of moonlight and shadows, somewhere in that world of snow and barren trees just ahead, that lonely boy waited still for the day and the hour that never came." Again in 1961, he led off his collection *Wisconsin in their Bones* with "The Christmas Virgin" as he had opened his two previous collections of

short stories with a piece about Margery, and in that same volume included "The Boundary of Now."

We know from Derleth's own writings that he had liaisons with other women before he died. This fact is underscored by his book of erotic poems *Caitlin* (1969), dedicated "for Caitlin, with love," and *Love Letters to Caitlin* (1971), which dispensed in narrative the events touched upon in his book of poetry. Yet, as late as 1966, he published in Vol. 2, 1966 of *The Minnesota Review* "The White Stars," which again dealt with the remembered ecstasy and injury of a date with Margery and the efforts of her parents to break them apart. He was then, depending upon the time of the year, at least 57 years of age, a divorced man with two children and yet, as he so liked to describe it, that "revenant" of first romance still haunted him.

His marriage to Sandra proved that attempts to recapture that first rapture were an illusion. It lived only in memory and in his works on the printed page. Did Margery remain part of his persona to the end of his life? There is the possibility it did. It's interesting to note that, when inscribing a copy of *Caitlin* to his long-time friend Donald Wandrei, Derleth wrote: "My last love story." Did that erase the bond with Margery, or was it just another interlude?

Following his divorce in 1959, Derleth had two children to raise as well as to pursue his writing career. He solved this by bringing his mother and father to live with him in "The Place of the Hawks." To get the feel of living with Derleth from one of his children's standpoint, I got Walden Derleth to agree to an interview, which took place Saturday, October 8, 1988, at a motel in Madison, Wisconsin.

According to Walden, August Derleth never struck either child for any reason; he would talk to them, try to reach an accord of reason. When that failed, he would "ground" them. Walden remembers punishments like being forced to study for two days with strictly no television. During summer he had to mow the lawn. Since the lawn was 100 yards in length and since the lawn mower was not automatic, this was quite a physical ordeal. Walden hated doing it, as well he might.

Walden was a great lover of sports and Derleth had small interest in them. If his infraction was serious, he would be deprived of participating in or enjoying golf, tennis and baseball. Derleth didn't overdo it; punishments for what he considered minor infractions were rarely longer than three days.

There were some things he wouldn't tolerate. When Walden sassed his grandmother, Derleth brought him up short, and he would not do it again.

Walden always felt that his father liked sister April best. He attributed this to the fact that she was more of a reader and a "brain"—although he used to force Walden to read books and give him an oral book report.

It had been his father's hope that Walden would follow in his footsteps, but Walden felt that he disappoint-

ed his father. His interest in sports was not shared by Derleth, and his grades in school were only average. Derleth leaned toward April, though he felt her high school interests were not the best.

At the end they became close. Derleth reconciled himself to a wide spectrum of interests in his children according to personalities and he told them: "Just do what you want to do and I'll support you."

In 1976, April married, but her first marriage was short-lived and she remarried. Derleth's sister, Hildred moved back from California in 1976 and took the grandmother in with her. In mid-1977, the grandmother voluntarily opted to go to a local nursing home because many of her old-time friends were there. She died in October, 1979, retaining all of her faculties into her nineties.

Walden remembers his mother was horrified with his father shouting at people out of the window, regardless of his state of undress: "Come right up." He remembers her telling him that Edgar Lee Masters and his wife and Frank Lloyd Wright and his wife responded by walking up into their bedroom while they were still in bed.

As to food, his father was a gourmand rather than a gourmet, quantity being an important factor to him. He didn't worry much about cholesterol levels; among his favorites was deep dish cherry pie with ice cream on top of it. In fact, when periodic Walden-fests are held to his memory in Sauk City, that dessert is usually prepared and served.

During World War II, Derleth first got a deferment when Donald Wandrei, his partner in Arkham House, went off to the armed services and he correctly claimed he was the only one left to get out Clark Ashton Smith's collection *Out of Space and Time*, which he was preparing for the printer. He then felt he could get a further deferment on the basis of a hernia which he had, but then, to his surprise, the army examiners discovered he had a heart condition.

This persisted over the years; at the end of 1966, after not answering his correspondence for a period, he sent out a form letter which read in part: "I had evidently reached a point of exhaustion, and I was hit in rapid succession by a digestive upset, a virus infection of the lung that persisted, and, finally, a silent, if minimal coronary, which evidently occurred sometime during November 25 (1966) and was fortuitously observed on a cardiogram on the 26th. Since November 28 I have been hospitalized, and I have only this week (end of December) been released to go home and to resume work at half time, so to speak."

"The digestive upset yielded to treatment in ten days, the virus infection left me feverish for five weeks, took 20 lbs. off me (no loss), and left me somewhat debilitated, and the coronary damage seems to be stabilizing. I need yet to lose 20 more pounds, and to adjust to rather limited working hours—at least for some time to come."

An illness in 1969, which led to an 87-day hospital stay—40 of it in intensive care—was inaugurated by a gall bladder condition. Walden reported that the doctors asserted his father needed tough surgery for gallstones. He went into the hospital on a weekend and was in surgery three hours later.

He was X-rayed later, and it was found that the two stones were no longer in the gall bladder but were in the process of passing through, so Walden felt the initial (more would follow) surgery had been unnecessary, and that the doctors had panicked because Derleth was so prominent a figure and in ghastly pain. But his vital signs afterward were not good. He came down with staph pneumonia, resulting in a 37-day hospital stay. His heart became unstable and was not stabilized until 21 days before his release.

An interesting sidelight was, that while in the hospital, he spoke rationally to his secretary Kay Price, but abruptly developed an interest in sports, which he had previously disdained, as well as what was happening at school. His pneumonia was not brought under control for six weeks and he may have had peritonitis.

This siege in the hospital probably was a major factor in his death a few years later, by greatly weakening his heart.

For a publisher who made a fetish of replying to every order or correspondence the same day it was received, this prolonged hospital stay must have been psychological agony added to that of physical pain. He

wrote A.J.A. Dudley, now heir to the estate of William Hope Hodgson on December 14, 1969 concerning it: "I am sorry to be so late in replying to your last letter—but the fact is that I spent 87 days of the summer and autumn in hospitals, enduring four major operations, and associated illnesses. I lost 53 pounds but got 15 of them back, and will now remain at 190 pounds for the foreseeable future, I trust. I faced over 500 letters to answer, but I am down to the last 50 or so, and I expect to be caught up this week, after which I'll get to new creative work."

"We've had a difficult time during my absence, but fortunately my 15-year-old daughter took hold of the business, arranged for shipment of books ordered, and made out the invoices; so that I was not at least over-



whelmed with thousands of books to be sent out when I returned."

The day of his death, July 4, 1971, he awoke feeling so bad he mentioned it to each member of the family. Despite this, he fulfilled his daily ritual of going down to the post office to get his mail.

Walden was awakened by a voice in an adjoining bed room, which was his father speaking to his grandmother. He could hear everything clearly. His father was breathing very heavily and complaining that he was feeling untypically tired and wanted to go back to bed. The grandmother urged him to do just that, but instead he continued his complaints for a half an hour. April was off on a trip and did not hear the conversation.

He had orders to rest. The day before he held a conference about Arkham while reclining in bed. Present were Kay Price, George Marks, and Carl Gansler. He brought up the possibility of taking a European trip, preferably a cruise because he was afraid to fly. England was suggested as one possible destination.

The day of his death, he abruptly had an attack of the dry heaves, so bad that it frightened Walden, who phoned for an ambulance. It was a heart attack in progress; he never returned from the hospital but died the same day, at 9:55 A.M.

At the Waldenfest October 9, 1988, Walden was the featured speaker. He had this to say about his father. "On the surface he seemed tough, but underneath the facade cared enough for everyone who wrote to him that he was going to give them the courtesy of a reply. My father is not dead. The only death for a writer is when his books go out of print."

In those last few moments of consciousness, whether in the ambulance or intensive care, knowing that this might be the end, what crossed Derleth's mind? Certainly he was concerned about how his children would cope with his death. Perhaps he wondered what might eventually become of Arkham House, and undoubtedly regretted any work left unfinished. Let us hope that from the archives of his memory, there came to him like a vision, a slender blond-haired girl, almost as tall as he, about 15 years old, with braids coiled tastefully above her head, whose very presence revealed that she had escaped from the watchfulness of her parents and out of time lost to spend the last minutes of awareness with him.

Next issue: the final instalment in Sam Moskowitz' three-part look at August Derleth, "Return To Sauk City."



Book Review

The Selected Works of Michael Arnzen: Needles And Pins

Dark Regions Press, 1993; 88 pgs.; \$5.95

P.O. Box 6301; Concord, CA 94524

★★ 1/2

Reviewed by Mark Louis Baumgart

Dark Regions' *Selected Works* series is in the format of the late *Pulphouse* single-author collections, only thinner and concentrating on current horror authors instead of current sf authors, with each issue spotlighting a particular author and his/her works.

This collection could easily have been named after the late British magazine *Psycho Candy*—since most of these stories deal with real people and real situations with nary a supernatural element in sight; in fact most of these stories, with their black humor and strong ironic tone, would have fit well in *Alfred Hitchcock's*, before that magazine was lobotomized by Davis Publications.

"Phrenological Love" is a satirical love story that also successfully utilizes an old vaudeville/slapstick punch line to emphasize a man looking for love. Love is also the theme behind "Receiver," a crime story of a different color, told entirely via telephone answering machines.

The theme of "what-is-self" is the core of many of the stories included here, such as "Marked," a paranoid crime story about an artist on the run and the man pursuing her, a man who also considers himself an artist, and about how both react to attempts at depriving them of practicing their art. "Copycats" concerns a man who wants to take the identity of a famous rock star for himself and what happens when he tries. Then there is "Counterpoint," about a man who is "cured" of his fear of needles—but that's only half of the story.

Arnzen also explores psychotic behavior in the mainstream-ish story "An Eye For An Eye" (a man forced to tattoo at gunpoint), "Spring Ahead, Fall Back" (a serial killer tale), "The Spirit Of The Bayonet" (a man driven over the edge by his stint in boot camp), or, "A Lust For Lungs," concerning a compulsive smoker who must find something else to smoke when he's trapped in an elevator sans smokes.

With the exception of "A Change Of Policy," which is a minor Fredric Brown fantasy pastiche, and "Nirvana By Noon," an incoherent story about immortality and metaphysics, most of the stories in this collection fall into the "weird crime" category. The stories are short and easy to read, with the only real problems being: some of the stories could use judicious editing; a rather fatuous Karl Edward Wagner introduction; Marge Simon's muddy artwork, which could easily have been replaced by another story.

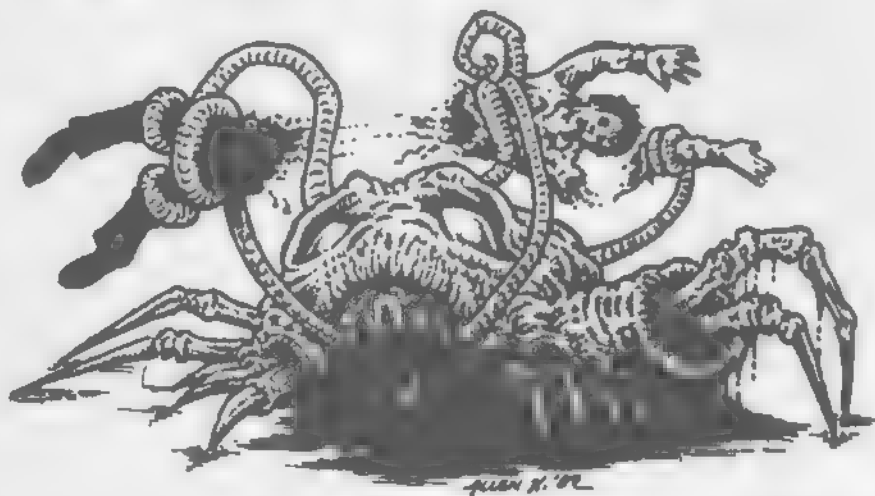
JYHAD



A Darkmaster Game of Modern Gothic Horror.



THE LATE SHOW



capsule reviews of vintage films
by Lawrence McCallum

This issue's installment of *The Late Show* evaluates several classic horror films, and a few lesser known efforts as well.

DRACULA

(Universal, 1931; 75m min.) ★★★ 1/2

Slow, restrained, highly effective version of the Stoker classic directed by Tod Browning. The sanguinary Count Dracula, a 400 year old fiend in human form, satisfies his thirst for blood until defeated by the resourceful Dr. Van Helsing. Atmospheric, often compelling thriller features some good comic relief and brilliant camera work by Karl Freund. Bela Lugosi, Edward Van Sloan and Dwight Frye star in this fine supernatural melodrama.

THE INVISIBLE MAN (Universal, 1933; 71 min.) ★★★

Well-acted, thoroughly involving SF/horror effort based on the novel by H.G. Wells. A scientist's experiments with an invisibility formula lead to madness and mayhem. Eerie, atmospheric film is done with generally good special effects and some nice comic touches. Good

performances by Claude Rains, Gloria Stuart, E. E. Clive and Una O'Connor. Directed by James Whale.

ISLAND OF LOST SOULS

(Paramount, 1932; 74 min.) ★★★

Bizarre, frightening film version of H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. A brilliant scientist turns animals into

humans with horrific, often tragic results. Strikingly photographed shocker has some genuinely bone-chilling sequences, though the film doesn't quite equal the power of Wells' original work. Good performances by Charles Laughton, Richard Arlen, Bela Lugosi and Kathleen Burke.

THE INVISIBLE RAY

(Universal, 1936; 80 min.)

★★ 1/2

Competent thriller about an ambitious scientist's attempt to uncover a new power source, leading to his emergence as a crazed killer with "the touch of death." Reasonable script is enhanced by good special effects plus fine performances

by

Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Frances Drake and Frank Lawton.

NIGHT OF TERROR

(Col., 1933; 79 min.) ★★

Minor but fairly entertaining horror-suspense thriller starring Bela Lugosi as a mad killer who leaves newspaper clippings pinned to his victims. Rarely seen effort was one of the earliest full-color features and manages to survive its hokey final scene. Good supporting performances by Wallace Ford, Sally Blaine and Tully Marshall.



THE MUMMY

(Universal, 1933; 73 min.) ★★★

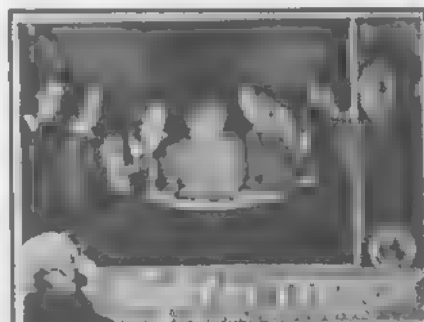
Subtle, visually excellent thriller directed by Karl Freund. Archeologists inadvertently revive the mummy of an Egyptian high priest (Boris Karloff) who then stalks the woman he believes to be the reincarnation of a long-dead princess. Slow, surprisingly sensible horror melodrama leans more toward atmosphere than violence. Well-acted by Karloff, Zita Johann and Edward Van Sloan.

FRANKENSTEIN

(Universal, 1931; 74 min.)

★★ 1/2

Updated version of Mary Shelley's novel is handsomely produced and, for



the most part, fairly restrained. The brilliant Dr. Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) creates an artificial man (Boris Karloff) with unexpectedly terrifying consequences. James Whale created a minor classic with this thriller, though it may not represent his best work. Co-starring are Mae Clark, John Boles, Edward Van Sloan, and Dwight Frye.

JUGGERNAUT

(Grand National, 1936; 74 min.) ★★ 1/2
Suspenseful thriller about a ruthless woman who enlists the aid of a doctor (Boris Karloff) in a plot to murder her husband. Karloff gives an intriguing performance as one of his more human "monsters." Joan Wyndham gives a competent supporting performance.

NIGHT MUST FALL

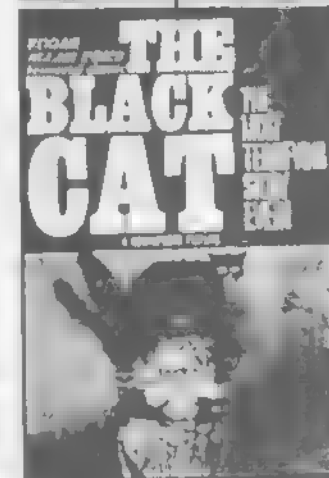
(MGM, 1937; 117 min.) ★★ ★
Intense, skillfully written psychological horror film based on the play by Emlyn Williams. A psychotic drifter (Robert Montgomery) arrives at the country home of Dame May Whitty, who doesn't realize how dangerously disturbed the young man is. Clever, well-acted and...just what does Mr. Montgomery carry in that strange hat-box? Rosalind Russell, Alan Marshall, E.E. Clive and Kathleen Harrison co-star.

LONDON BY NIGHT

(MGM, 1937; 69 min.) ★★ 1/2
Competent thriller has Scotland Yard detectives pursuing a crazed killer known as the "Umbrella Man." Eerie, near-horror suspense film stars George Murphy and Leo G. Carroll.

THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN

(Universal, 1935; 75 min.) ★★ ★
The Monster finds a mate in James Whale's superior sequel to his 1931 version of Mary Shelley's novel. Superb sets, a thundering musical score and John Mescall's fine camera work effectively enhance the John Balderston-William Hurlbut screenplay. Boris Karloff projects enough sensitivity into the role of the Monster to compensate for his awkward dialogue.



The competent supporting cast includes Collin Clive, Ernest Thesiger, Elsa Lanchester, Dwight Frye and John Carradine.

DRACULA'S DAUGHTER

(Universal, 1936; 70 min.) ★★ 1/2
This better than fair chiller has the reclusive Countess Zaleska (Gloria Holden) attempting to escape the curse of vampirism inherited from her father, Count Dracula. Well-produced horror tale features a wonderful character performance by Irving Pichel as the treacherous "Sandor." Edward Van Sloan, Otto Kruger and Marguerite Churchill co-star.

THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII

(RKO, 1935; 96 min.) ★★ ★
Though not really horror, this spectacular sword-and-sandal epic features the superb special effects of Willis O'Brien, making it a must-see for fans of the fantasy-adventure genre. Eye-popping visuals, excellent sets, and brilliantly-directed action sequences more than compensate for a few heavy-handed attempts at religious significance. Good performances by Preston Foster, Louis Calhern and Basil Rathbone.

THE RAVEN

(Universal, 1935; 74 min.) ★★ 1/2
Entertaining Poe spin-off in which the mad Dr. Vollin (Bela Lugosi) tricks an escaped convict (Boris Karloff) into becoming an instrument of revenge. Lots of atmosphere and a few interesting characterizations manage to cover the film's less convincing aspects.

THE BLACK CAT

(Universal, 1934; 70 min.) ★★ 1/2
A young couple on their honeymoon encounter terror and torture in a creepy mansion inhabited by Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. This dark, brooding shocker should satisfy horror addicts, although it has little to do with the Poe story on which it is supposedly based. Directed by Edgar G. Ulmer.



ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH

A survey of horror series, featuring:
Cheri Scotch's werewolf romances

...and is published by
Scott H. Urban

FULL MOON ON THE BAYOU: *The Loup-Garous of Cheri Scotch*

While other cities certainly possess their own distinctive personalities, New Orleans can make a strong case for being the most flamboyant. From Mardis Gras to the French Quarter...from Creole and Cajun to muf-faletta and po'-boys...from Marie Laveau to the Mississippi bayous, the very name "New Orleans" conjures up romantic notions of a city not entirely seated in this world, a place where the borders of possibility can be—and often are—crossed.

It's no wonder that so many authors select such a locale as the setting for their novels. New Orleans comes replete with an ambience that would be difficult, if not impossible, to generate in an entirely fictitious "parish." In addition, Anne Rice, Poppy Z. Brite, James Lee Burke—and now Cheri Scotch—have invested New Orleans with a not-entirely imaginary "occult history," turning it into perhaps the most haunted metropolis in all contemporary literature. In Cheri Scotch's trilogy—*The Werewolf's Kiss*, *The Werewolf's Touch*, and *The Werewolf's Sin*—southern Louisiana becomes the 'stalking grounds' for a unique group of shape-shifters.

I intensely dislike genre classifications, even though I realize their necessity as a marketing tool, steering readers to series and authors that will sell over and over. However, as much as I try to remain eclectic in my reading habits, I will admit to a personal bias—I rarely pick up "romance" novels. I understand many romance novels may be as well-written and relevant as books in any other category. However, I also know few romance novels are going to have as their primary focus that which I find fascinating—the shifting and nebulous territory between the real and unreal (despite a growing trend toward what I guess can be called, for lack of a better term, "dark romance"). Since Scotch's novels were published under a "romance" banner, it might have been a long time before I picked them up on my own—if it hadn't been for this article. However, upon completing all three I found myself pleasantly surprised. Although not without flaws, Scotch's trilogy features brisk pacing, occasional shocks, large doses of passionate and perverse sex, and a well-structured

culture for Louisiana's loup-garous.

Each volume centers on the members of the Marley family. In the first volume, seventeen year old Sylvie Marley is a beautiful debutante, former Mardis Gras queen, and future Tulane undergrad. At the same time, she makes night-long excursions outside during the full moon, hypnotically drawn to its pale illumination. Her nocturnal wanderings horrify her father, Andrew Marley, an Episcopalian bishop and former shape-shifter. Much earlier in life, Andrew thought he had thrown off the curse that had plagued his family for decades. Now, however, he is not so certain he succeeded.

Against her father's protests, Sylvie enters the company of Louisiana's lycanthropes. She meets Achille Broussard, police detective and king of the Bayou Goula loup-garous...Zizi, originally a French noblewoman who became the first werewolf in the New World...and Lucien Drago, Zizi's son, a renowned symphony conductor.

From them, Sylvie learns that while the loup-garous are not immortal, they are graced with extraordinarily long lives. Loup-garous age one year to every ten human years. They also possess powerful psychic gifts. They can more or less read the minds of individuals they come in contact with and maintain a more nebulous network of empathy with all werewolves around the world. They have wonderful recuperative powers and can only be harmed by silver.

Werewolves *must* transform at least once a month and consume a human heart. This stipulation becomes the crux of a lycanthrope's moral dilemma: whether to kill savagely, at random—or carefully select a victim whose death will rid the world of a criminal or psychopath. As Sylvie herself later explains to another character:

"...We kill for higher reasons, Walt. Our kind of werewolf is dedicated to the goddess Hecate, patroness of things dark and secret, the goddess who metes out justice. We're her instruments. When human justice fails, the loup-garou succeeds. We know who's innocent and who's guilty, and as long as we have to kill by our very nature, we make the choice to kill selectively."

According to Scotch's Mythos, the original shape-shifter was Lycaon, a king in ancient Arcadia. When he plotted the death of the god Jupiter, he was cursed to assume the form of

a beast. Instead of learning the error of his ways, Lycaon embraced his animalistic nature and grew to look upon humans merely as prey, game to be stalked, toyed with, and then devoured.

Lycaon in turn infects Apollonius of Tyre, already an immortal magician. It is Apollonius who develops the loup-garou's "code of honor," the dictum of killing only those who truly deserve to die. These two become the antithesis of each other, rivals contending for the nature of every loup-garou to follow.

These revelations are set against a conflict in the New Orleans voodoo community. Pauline, the old voodoo queen, has died, leaving the mantle to her step-daughter Mae Charteris, Achille's lover. Mae believes in using the *gris-gris* only for beneficent purposes. But Pauline's grandson Antoine is jealous and opposes Mae. He calls on the spirit of *la Reine Blanche*, the White Voodoo Queen who many decades before had cursed the Marley family. As Antoine falls under her power, his ceremonies turn into demonic rites. His control of the illegal drug flow keeps his followers in check.

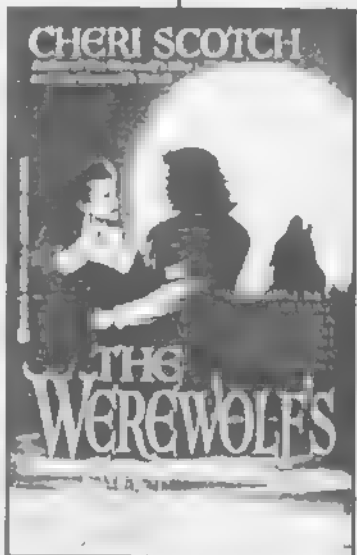
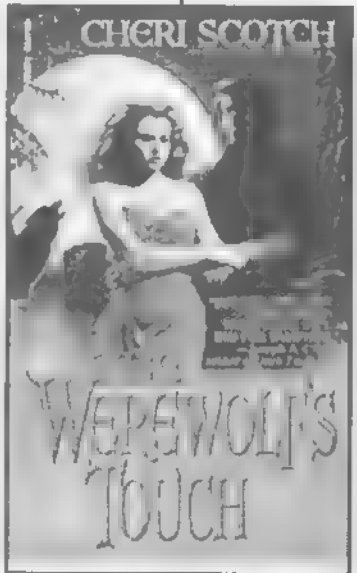
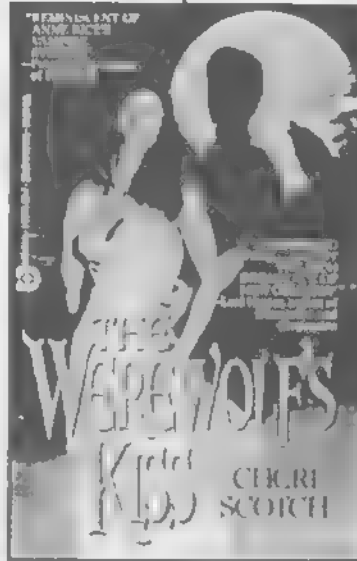
Eventually Antoine threatens the Marley family and nearly succeeds in getting Sylvie under his control. But all the *loas* and voodoo saints are relatively incidental to the introduction of the characters and the establishment of the groundwork for the loup-garou mythology.

The second volume, *The Werewolf's Touch*, is the weakest of the three. It serves as a book-length flashback, detailing the lives of the earlier members of the Marley clan. The narrative hops back and forth through time, sometimes confusingly. Since most of the story has already been related in the first book (albeit in a more succinct form), there's really nothing new presented.

English-born Stephen Marley immigrates to New Orleans and parlays his meager savings into a thriving shipping line, making him a millionaire. Blanche Pitre falls in love with him, but when Stephen discovers she is a murderous voodoo queen, he first rejects and then accidentally kills her. She curses his line—the firstborn of each generation will become a werewolf on his or her proudest night.

Stephen's daughter turns into a loup-garou on her wedding night and proceeds to slaughter her new husband.

Stephen's grandson, Walter, a Nobel Prize winning scientist, cannot accept his condition and shoots himself. Andrew, a priest and later Sylvie's father, rejects his bestial side as well. With the assistance of the Bayou Goula loup-



garous and voodoo, he defeats Blanche's spirit and lifts the curse from his line.

The third volume, *The Werewolf's Sin*, possessed the potential to be the most intriguing of the series. Readers get to meet both Lycaon, the amoral werewolf, and Apollonius, virtually a lycanthropic messiah. Lycaon heads for New Orleans, his only goal to sow discord and chaos among the Bayou Goula loup-garous. Each of the Louisiana shape-shifters is facing a crisis, acerbated by Lycaon's manipulations. He is able to turn them against one another by playing on their jealousies, their dreams, and the lure of their bestial natures.

The final showdown between the two primordial wolfmen should have been a suspenseful capstone to the entire trilogy. The image of two immortal shape-shifters dueling for the collective soul of their kind is a powerful one. Unfortunately, the climax becomes buried in metaphysical prattle as the antagonists argue about *who* is the antithesis of *whom* and whether or not one of them can survive without the other. By the time the chariot of Dis arrives with its "commanding driver" and "six skeletal horses," the reader is shaking his head with confusion, rather than fright.

Still, each book in the series is eminently readable. Following Anne Rice's lead, there are extended historical flashbacks that allow the characters to interact with the likes of a young Marquis de Sade and Marie Laveau. Some of the names are just a little too "precious" for me—one character travels as "Dr. Endore," while another is named "Delilah Faust" (*sure!*). Obviously some characters are more carefully delineated than others. Lucien Drago, Sylvie's lover and later husband, is standard-issue H.D.B. (handsome, dark, and brooding) and just doesn't get to do very much that's interesting. On the other hand, Achille Broussard is a fascinating creation. At the beginning of the series he is a wise-cracking homicide lieutenant who just also happens to be the king of the loup-garous. But after his lover Mae Charteris, the voodoo queen, is murdered, he becomes a recluse, shutting himself off from both human and werewolf contact. Over time he assumes some of Mae's responsibilities, bringing medicine and cures to the low-country needy. His character develops, even matures, in an engaging, believable fashion.

But I'm forced to ask...do they *really* say "Ooo-wee!" in Louisiana?

It's almost enough to make me travel to New Orleans and find out for myself.

The Werewolves' Kiss. Diamond, 1992. 262 pp.

The Werewolf's Touch. Diamond, 1993. 260 pp.

The Werewolf's Sin. Diamond, 1994. 239 pp.

OVERLOOK LIBRARY

by Don D'Amassa



MY NEED CREATES MY SELF

Although the werewolf achieved some stature in horror films, the creature has never achieved similar success in prose. There are exceptions, of course, such as Guy Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris* and more recently Robert McCammon's *The Wolf's Hour* and Michael Cadnum's *St. Peter's Wolf*, but for the most part novels of were-creatures have devolved into formulaic descriptions of carnage, perhaps wrapped around the form of a murder mystery. The werewolf is not a romantic figure like the vampire, not as unsettling as ghosts, and not as relentlessly menacing as demons and other monsters. It may be that the werewolf has lost his place to serial killers and psychotic murderers. Hannibal Lector, Norman Bates, and Jeffrey Dahmer all embody that same concept—that beneath a perfectly ordinary exterior lurks a creature capable of violent, even disgusting violence.

Robert Stallman turned the theme on its head in the early 1980s, however, with the appearance of a trilogy that remains the only fiction of his ever to see print. In fact, he died before the third volume appeared, one of the most tragic losses to the field of speculative fiction of all time. Stallman's trilogy, *The Orphan*, *The Captive*, and *The Beast*, all published by Pocket Books, was marketed as fantasy, contained elements of SF, but its theme was that of a horror story—with the roles reversed.

Set in the 1930s, the trilogy features as its protagonist a creature who can transform himself into a human—various humans in fact—during the course of the story, which opens with the rules of its existence.

"I am and will be. There is no time when I am not."
"My need creates my self."
"Alone is safe."

Surprised by a human while killing some livestock, the beast assumes the form of a young boy, Robert Lee Burney, complete with a set of memories and a distinct personality. The creature has no clear recollection of its own history, although it was left on Earth by a kind of flying saucer, apparently to undergo a kind of rite of passage. Burney and the creature are aware of each other, but there's no question of who's in charge. "His mind was empty and waiting for the whole world." The beast wears its human personality like a set of clothing, although it makes certain concessions in order to avoid incessant arguments.

Eventually his adopted family is menaced by a gang of evil men and the beast emerges to protect those he thinks of as family. Unfortunately, the farmer he considers his father is killed in the struggle, and his foster mother believes the transformation to be a sign of demonic possession. So Robert Lee Burney disappears from the face of the Earth, supplanted by Charles Cahill. "I am still present at the shift, as I usually am when a new person arrives."

As his human persona changes, so does the beast's nature. It becomes more fastidious in its hunting, no longer killing just for the sport of it. "Perhaps I too am becoming civilized and will soon be eating Red Heart dog food in three delicious flavors..." Cahill is a teenager, a self-described runaway, unofficially adopted by an elderly woman related to the family that took in Robert Lee Burney.

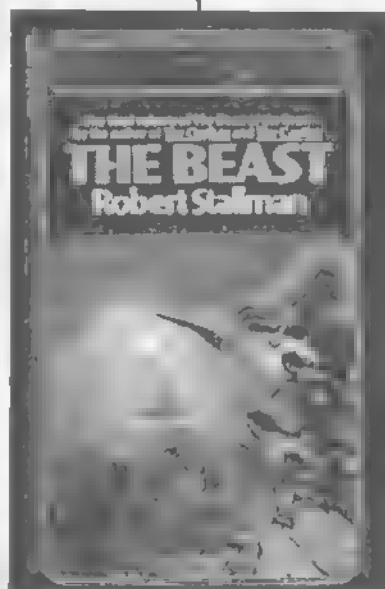
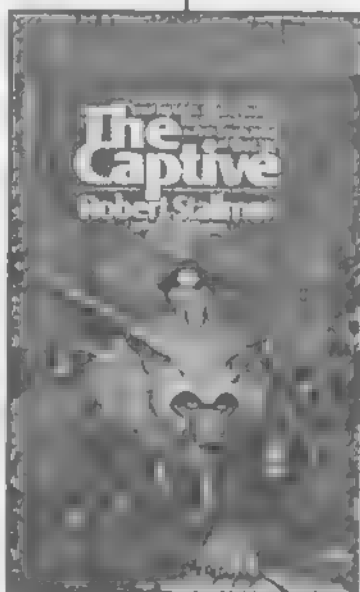
The older boy is less willing to be dominated by the beast and takes steps to prevent himself from being discarded in the same fashion as Burney. For some reason, the shift cannot take place inside the walls of his new home, a development which he eventually links to an ancient stone carving which somehow locks the beast away. Charles gains possession of the stone, wears it as an amulet, and the beast is imprisoned in its human disguise. Not without power, however, because it can still communicate with Charles and, when an emergency endangers their lives, the beast emerges to regain control.

By this point, the reader is likely to be struggling with several unresolved questions. Where are the human personalities coming from, for example? Are they completely fabricated, stolen from real people living elsewhere, or do they derive from some other source? And what is the true nature of the beast? Is it an alien, a monster, good or evil? At one point the beast admonishes Charles: "I believe what you call the monster and the hero are the same thing." Medical examinations detect no abnormality, so the transformation is complete, and on some occasions, there is evidence that people knew the beast's personae before it adopted them. But if they were real, where are those individuals now, and if not, how were false memories imposed on others?

Stallman reinforces the theme of monster as hero several times, most notably with a discussion of the underlying theme of the legend of Beowulf and Grendel. He also implies that the beast's kind is not something new to the world, because a stone carving turns up which is clearly meant to depict a creature similar to its natural form. And we also learn that the beast is not entirely in control of its own emotions. As it advances toward sexual maturity, it becomes more and more subject to the emotional nature of humans. Ultimately the beast's sexual liaison with a prized cow makes it impossible for the Cahill personality to continue, and it's time to move on to the next setting.

As Barry Golden, a handsome young adult, the beast moves to Chicago and makes the acquaintance of the daughter of the farmer who adopted Burney. She's married to an abusive neo-Nazi but there's an instant chemistry between herself and "Golden" that leads to violence and a subsequent divorce. But the beast almost loses his own liberty in the process, injured seriously in an accident that was at least partly contrived by the angry husband.

As it lays virtually paralyzed in the forest, the beast discovers that it has developed the ability to affect the will of certain humans, and causes a young couple to move him to a more secluded spot, the basement of an abandoned building. But that respite doesn't last long, and the beast is subsequently imprisoned as a carnival exhibit, believed to be a strange variety of bear. And once again Burney's adopted mother enters the scene, recognizing the creature as the one who "caused" her husband's death, determined to end its life. She wears another of the amulets that prevent



the beast from shapeshifting when she's present, and as time passes, the beast seems to have adjusted to its life as a prisoner. Fortunately, Barry Golden has other ideas, and eventually precipitates an escape.

The final volume starts to resolve issues. First we learn that there are other were-creatures on Earth, some of them much more sophisticated than the beast, although they seem to have failed the passage to maturity and are imprisoned in the form of simple animals like coyotes and birds. But we also learn of Lily, a female beast living in New York City, her human disguise in love with a man whom she has saved from a premature death to the ravages of cancer.

Lily's beast disrupts her life, having learned of the original creature through the telepathic influence of Barry Golden's adopted daughter, whose ability to see the beast's true shape is never really explained. It is through her that we learn the truth about the human personae, that they are personalities "borrowed" from the recently dead, that Burney and Cahill and Golden and Lily have all died and their souls wait in limbo, unable to pass on until the beasts are through with them. And neither Lily nor Barry Golden are willing to go peacefully.

The various conflicts are all resolved against the context of a somewhat melodramatic rescue. Barry's wife and child have been abducted by the ex-husband and carried off to a remote mountain location where they are forced to work for a group of American Nazis convinced that Hitler's credo will spread to the United States. Before the battle is over, however, we discover that the beast is perhaps more human than some of the rest of us, and Barry Golden's determination to live allows him to physically split away from the beast, no longer sharing the same body, but no longer dead either.

There are a few clumsy spots in the trilogy, but they become visible only in retrospect. Stallman created a cast of credible, even likable characters, wrapped their lives around a series of genuinely interesting mysteries, and delivered it all up in a lively and stimulating prose style. There are cleverly constructed echoes of the central themes throughout the three volumes, such as the uniformity and connectivity of the family with which the beast interacts and the transposition of monster and hero. Alas, out of print for over a decade now, Stallman's trilogy remains one of the most original and interesting twists on the subject of shapechanging ever written.



DEJA'S DOMICILE OF DREAD

by Ben Depp

Rend and Claw, Bite and Scratch



Chocolate has vanilla, Abbott has Costello, and Country has Western. Every general category has two separate and discrete types that just *seem* to belong together, no matter how different they may or may not be.

(You've read the front cover...you know where this is leading, right?)

In the case of classic horror archetypes, the werewolf is always mentioned in the same breath as the vampire. They're so connected, in fact, that two of the most common comic book anthology plots revolve around the both of them at each other's throats. Werewolves are also the most common horror 'window dressing' next to zombies, appearing on covers of comic books ranging from super-hero books to teen comedy titles—most often during Halloween.

Now I've been led to believe that Peter Infantino has covered the most obvious furry suspects, like *Werewolf By Night* and *Eerie's* utterly pointless "Curse of the Werewolf" serial. So, in a desperate attempt to fit in, I thought I'd discuss some more obscure instances of werecreatures, and tie them up in a roundabout way with issue #12's article on vampire heroes.

There are some heroes who, while not necessarily werewolves, are shapechangers. For example, Chris Claremont utilized a shapechanging mutant named Rahne Sinclair to explore the effect of a deeply religious upbringing on someone who's different in early issues of *The New Mutants*. Rahne had the ability to change into a wolf and was a ward of the church in Scotland. The pastor of the church, and Rahne's guardian, accused Rahne of being a spawn of the devil when her powers first manifested in the graphic novel that began the series. During the course of the initial story, Rahne is taken in by supporting character Moira MacTaggart and enrolled in Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters.

What made Rahne so intriguing as a character was that, as a devout Christian, she wholeheartedly believed that she was sinful. In the initial graphic novel, Claremont has Rahne all but say she's demonic and doesn't deserve to be treated like a human being. Furthermore, Rahne's upbringing col-

ored her opinion of such innocuous things as the team's outfits, which she deemed salacious and indecent. There were some interesting plot threads set up—

—that Claremont rarely took advantage of. Outside of scenes of Rahne praying in church, the exploration of her Christian faith got scuttled in favor of hidden Roman civilizations, forced gladiatorial combat, a trip to Vahalla, conflicts with an Amerind demon, and other sundry matters. While some of these things may be of interest to us (some of them, in fact, will be covered in a future column concerning Amerind mysticism in comics), they have little or no bearing on our current topic.

Another shapechanging 'hero' was the unimaginatively named Werehawk, one of the members of *Dave Cockrum's Futurians*. This queer fusing of postapocalyptic and super-hero motifs will be covered at greater length in the future, but its shapeshifter was an Amerind lawyer whose exposure to a futuristic genetics experiment gives him the ability to transmute into a grisly purple birdman. While the book's expansive cast of eight characters left little space for characterization, Cockrum did allow us to see how creepy a power like that could be (it was actually one of the more interesting motifs of the book; for every neat power one of the characters had, another would always shiver because it freaked them out).

Which leads us to one thing the majority of shapechangers in comics suffer from—a lack of control. The most popular shapechangers, from the Hulk to the Lizard to Lady Jane, submerge their personality to access their powers. More often than not, the personality that becomes dominant is less intellectual, more feral and 100% dangerous. It's what makes the shapechanger more popular as a villain.

For an extreme illustration of this, dig up the issues of an underground comic called *Hot Stuff* for a peek at "The Manimal." This grim-as-all-get-out series by Ernie Colon—better known for such light fare as *Amyphest* and *Star Wars Droids*—focused on a series of gruesome mutilation murders. An investigation into this crime wave indicates a link between the victims: all were Nazi war criminals associated with one concentration camp. This camp conducted a few unholy experiments, and that's the crux of the matter: one of those experiments has borne fruit in the son of a raped

and degraded survivor, allowing him to transform into a bestial monstrosity with only one thing on its mind—payback.

Manimal is magnificently drawn by Colon. His clean, strong lines really demonstrate why utilizing his skills on humorous material is a tragic waste. And the scenes of violence, while graphic, are choreographed inventively and with a great deal of forward momentum. But it's also in extremely poor taste. The concentration camp angle is treated with the subtlety of a Jason movie, so much so that Colon has gone on record questioning whether he should have published it after all. When all is said and done, *Manimal* is an interesting document that allows one of the underrated talents in comics to shine. You'd be hard pressed to find the original issues in which the strip appeared; it was reprinted by Renegade a few years back, though.

Because shapechangers are pure attitude and without much in the way of individual personality (at least in the case of their animal sides), these furies tend to adapt pretty well to being cannon fodder. Whenever a hero needs a slightly macabre touch to their usual obligatory fight scene, you'll be sure to find waves of innocents transformed into animal men. What they've transformed into depends upon the nature of the hero: most writers go the straight werewolf route, but someone like the Sub-Mariner might end up dealing with amphibian monstrosities (as he did in one of the last issues of his original series). Some of these are wolfen due to scientific experimentation. Some of them, though, are transformed through hazier means, such as Romulus, the athlete transformed into a werewolf by the devious Professor Milo in an old issue of *Batman*.

Romulus is an example of the sole opponent, a shapechanger who's more than enough for one hero to handle. They've gotten pretty damn bizarre in the past, even when restricted to common werewolf types: the Man-Wolf, who first entered Spider-Man's nightmares in issue #121 of his series, turned out to be the avatar of a lupine hero looking to liberate an alien race (?), and the Lobo Brothers utilized their lycanthropy to solidify their position as gang lords. And some of the other choices were kind of strange: dragons (The Basilisk from *Morbius the Living Vampire* and Dragon from *The Southern Knights*, unique in that he was a dragon whose secondary form was a human), strange great cat-like beasts (Catseye, who was actually an alien who switched between her natural, human and cat form), pink-skinned prehistoric humanoids with over-

sized craniums (Animus), dinosaurs (Stegron, another Spider-Man foe), lizards (both the Lizard and the Iguana, the latter a Spider-Man character who was a lizard transformed into a human), and hyenas (The Hyena, one of the more horrific foes of personal fave Firestorm). The shapechanger has even been the source of parody; Roy Thomas' *Captain Carrot and the Zoo Crew* featured a wolf who turned into a human called, you guessed it, the Wuz-Wolf. But there are instances of shapechangers played painfully straight. The one that comes closest to looking under the surface to examine the reasonings behind the werewolf myth was in *Swamp Thing* (2nd series) #40. The story, entitled "The Curse," was part of Alan Moore's year-plus storyline, "American Gothic," in which Moore and artists Steve Bissette and John Totleben chose to examine horror archetypes. Their werewolf story focused on a woman named Phoebe, a housewife who expresses her anger at being oppressed by her husband literally; she sheds her skin to reveal a barely humanoid wolf beneath. But when she can't kill the object of her hatred, the Phoebe/Wolf decides to commit *hari-kari* on a display of steak knives. It's a very bleak story. Moore never gives Phoebe any hope, and Bissette and Totleben's artwork seems to emphasize that fact via the layouts (Phoebe is never shown standing straight; even when she's wolfen, she's perpetually bent over) and heavy usage of blacks. "The Curse" is not the best of the "American Gothic" (I prefer the story

that follows, a ghost story cum voodoo tale set in an Antebellum mansion and the one-issue trip to the Remington House, a 'haunted house' that actually exists), but the fact that Moore is actually making connections and not using his werewolf just as a rubbersuit makes it remarkable.

But aside from that story, the exploration of some of the other aspects of traditional werewolf lore are fairly rare. This is a creature who, after all, is utilized mostly as a punchline in anthology features ("You thought to prey upon me when I will prey on you!"...That sort of thing). That being said, comics have done okay in examining the trans-generational nature of the werewolf curse—the idea in some European myths that a werewolf is the responsibility of his family. *Werewolf by Night* exploited that in the early issues of its run; I'd like to finish this formless ramble by citing two other examples of werewolves as familial problems.

The silliest, beyond a shadow of a doubt, is in Atlas' *The Cougar* (that's right, kiddies; it's Tom's obsession, Atlas, again). This is one of the wackiest premises this company ever, ever came up



Giving new meaning to 'shedding your skin,' Phoebe transforms in *Swamp Thing* #40.

with. It's such a goofy concept, in fact, that it's to the credit of its creative team that it worked at all. Basically, the Cougar was stuntman Jeff Rand. Rand's aspirations to be an actor are never quite fulfilled; the closest he comes is portraying a character called the Cougar in a B Horror/Adventure feature. So, when stunt work dries up, Rand decides to dress up in his Cougar outfit and hunt down monsters for a fee.

I know; there must've been a big demand for monster hunters in Hollywood during the '70s. But we learn in the second issue, "A Walk with a Werewolf," that our hero had more of a motivation. It seems that when he was a teenager, Jeff's brother Rick disapproved of his friendship with the local witch, Black Hettie. Rather than tell Rick to blow off, Hettie curses him with lycanthropy. During his first transformation, Rick kills his parents, making Jeff vow to eventually bring him in—which he does in that very self-same issue, dispatching his brother with a silver shiv.

The script for "A Walk with a Werewolf" was by Gary Freidrich, and it's woefully dated (characters still refer to 'Sweet Chicks' and promise to 'Dig You Later') and has a severe flow problem. And the artwork by Frank Robbins is sketchy, cartoony and flat-out weird. But the sheer *chutzpah* of trying to present that backstory with a straight face still makes me smile.*

A more recent example of the trans-generational angle is 'Breed' (\$2.50; Bravura), the latest work from Jim Starlin. Starlin, like my boy Howard Chaykin (see issue #13's *Domicile*, "Immortality Sucks (and Other Truisms)"), has a very distinct world view, and each of his series deal with several overriding themes, namely:

- 1) Death
- 2) Religion
- 3) Death
- 4) The Military
- 5) Massive Death, and most importantly...
- 6) Death

I bring this up because the first half of this series' initial issue is among the most blood-soaked I've seen in years (since, in fact, that OMAC story Starlin wrote which ended in the hero doing a Rodin's Thinker on top of a several-story-high pile of bodies). The blood comes from an investigation into mysterious doings around Bucksnort, Texas in 1949. Captain Stoner leads a recon mission into the



Werewolves '70s style: The Cougar's brother prepares to hack 'n' slash in the second issue of the series.

backwater town to find the place glowing green and literally soaked in blood. The walls show signs of claw marks; gnawed body parts litter the street. On top of a hill they find a house filled with more atrocities, the wall painted with bizarre patterns. While some unseen presence slaughters some of the soldiers, Stoner finds a teenaged girl clutching a sheet to her naked body....

And then some idiot turns out the lights.

To be fair, this sequence is effective in a large scale, Grand Guignol way. Later on, we learn that the girl was raped by a demon, and the progeny—a boy 'adopted by Stoner—is a 'Breed, a half-man, half-demon creature who transforms into a gray-skinned, horned beast whenever his dander gets up. Another 'Breed, a female named Rachel, takes the boy under her wing in a pocket dimension and tries to teach him how to cope with his newfound affliction. Meanwhile, Capt. Stoner, now heading a special unit called Project: Night Raiders, tries to unravel the mystery behind the frequent incursions into our world by the unseen demons.

Now there's a lot of promise in what Starlin has set up. As with most of his previous work (most particularly *Dreadstar*), the boy's got an ambitious story to tell, and it's to

his credit that we've got a bit of a handle on it fairly quickly. I'm particularly taken with the pocket dimension that Raymond is trained in by Rachel; as portrayed, we're not sure if it's the afterlife, a nexus of some sort, or something else entirely, even though it does follow an internal logic. And he does stumble across stray moments of striking horror, the best one having nothing to do with his transformation (it's in issue #4, if you're at all interested)

But there is a problem with 'Breed stemming from Starlin's background as a super-hero artist. Namely, he's not really comfortable with a book unless he can insert a fight scene before the last panel. Thus, instead of letting us get inside Raymond's peculiar predicament, watching him deal with his shapeshifting heritage, Starlin distracts us with pointless melees. And it doesn't help much when one of these fight scenes is the standard 'Stumbling Across the Mugging' set-ups that are standard issue super-hero stuff. At these moments, there's no difference between 'Breed and the latest *Midnight Sons* entry.



The face of the modern shapechanger: the titular character in Jim Starlin's 'Breed'.

Furthermore, Starlin's reliance on a standard dozen of facial types persists, so that Rachel looks like the Grand Inquisitor from *Dreadstar*, who looked like Mogul from *DC Comics Presents*, while Raymond's transformed self resembles a ram-horned Thanos.

It's my wish that Starlin continues to take 'Breed down the road that's the most intriguing, namely the training and acclimation of Raymond. But it doesn't look that way, especially with the introduction of an 'evil' 'Breed in the fourth issue. But then, I shouldn't be surprised; even *Werewolf by Night* reverted to super-hero clichés by having its monster join up with Iron Man in his battle against the Masked Marauder. And when it comes down to it, more often than not, having lycanthropy in a comic book world just means you have a neat old power.



For the longest time, my favorite horror comic was *Hellblazer*. That was the book I would always read first, and the one I followed with a mania bordering on insanity. When I worked at Time Warner for a few weeks



The King of Hell as Bono: the new face of *Hellstorm* by series artist Leonardo Manco.



Daimon Hellstorm confronts one of Leonardo Manco's more insane creations in *Hellstorm* #15.

doing a reorganization of their Book of the Month Club Membership Acquisition department, I made it a point to utilize a quote from John Constantine as my screen saver. No other comic has ever come close to toppling the chronicles of the back-street magus from the top spot.

Until now.

Marvel's *Hellstorm: Prince of Lies* (\$2.00) is coming awful close these days to overtaking the aforementioned book as my favorite. Thanks to the demented stylings of Warren Ellis, this once-confused chronicle of the ultimate dysfunctional son has turned into the most vicious, balls-out, frightening mainstream comic in a long time.

Warren's initial storyline has set the tone for the entire series. Entitled "Red Miracles," it focuses on Daimon's search for the killer of his friend Avram. Avram is just the latest in a series of occultist slayings occurring all over New York. An investigation with the help of occult terrorist Jaine Cutter reveals that the killer is murdering magicians to manufacture a suit of armor in tribute to Zaghurim, Satan's weaponsmith. As the investigation deepens, however, Daimon and Jaine realize the armor is neither the real tribute, nor a tribute at all.

If Warren stopped with this storyline, it would have been fine. But the three issues that followed included "Cigarette Dawn," the most frightening haunted house story

since *Hellblazer* #9 and a tale that tied up a year's worth of continuity with a masterful hand.

What makes Ellis such a treat is a combination of detail, imagination, and casual cruelty. The initial stories of his tenure are filled with sidetrips and little touches that give this book a scope other Marvel titles wish they had. For example, during the Red Miracles storyline, Ellis takes the time out to chronicle other incidents throughout the world; stuff like the Virgin Mary manifesting in front of a brothel in London and 'angels with punch daggers' moving in lockstep in Heaven. There's also Warren's usage of a third-rate villain called Deathurge to put paid to supporting characters and background appearances by Daimon's sister Satanna (now a streetwalker operating out of a deconsecrated church hanging with rotting corpses(!)). But even without the little sidetrips, the book is full of deliciously evil material. My favorite is the reason why the serial killer in 'Red Miracles' is targeting mystics: it seems that manna gives off its own radiation, and those people who are in constant contact with it become saturated with it, making them better material for magic armor.

And for examples of the book's casual cruelty, look no further than 'Cigarette Dawn.' In that issue, Ellis utilizes many historical torture devices and doesn't bat an eye (a situation made all the more unnerving when you realize that every one of these devices are real). There's also a subplot

involving a cop who's under Daimon's mind control. It seems that the man is so disturbed by how he was manipulated by the Prince of Hell that he's engaging in more and more extreme bouts of violence...

Granted, all this would have been less effective without a great artist to illustrate *Hellstorm*. Brazil's Leonardo Manco fits the bill perfectly. His style is moody and muddy, the kind of *film noir* scratchings that makes everything appear to be happening in a cloud of cigarette smoke. Through use of shading and perspective, Manco gives *Hellstorm* an otherworldly, offilter feel. And he's also one of the few artists (Mike Netzer being another) who is able to use shadows to define, rather than obscure action. Some mention should also be made of Manco's character designs, which reveal that he's as insane as Ellis is. Who else would portray Zhagurim as a bipedal, razortoothed porcupine possessing the corpse of George Washington(!) and a demon called the Bailiff as an impeccably dressed mass of cobwebs—replete with spiders(!) crawling through his finery.

According to Ellis and editor Marie Javins, *Hellstorm* is guaranteed at least a year without sales concerns (of course, all this has changed since the initial draft of this review; see the accompanying sidebar for details). It's a great book, and you'd be doing this genre a favor by picking it up and showing Marvel that well-done horror can be viable regardless of the shrieking of wary distributors and retailers.

The Man Behind The Prince Of Darkness

While *Hellstorm: Prince of Lies* has been limping around since 1992, its transformation from a confused work on the edge of cancellation to the most incredibly scary mainstream comic of the '90s is the work of Warren Ellis. While his work previously was only known in Great Britain (most significantly *Lazarus Churchyard*, a cyberpunk masterpiece for *Blast*), he's making a major name for himself here thanks to the violent and original rethinking of one of Marvel's-most abused characters. But how did this Brit, a man who calls *Hellblazer* scribe Garth Ennis evil ("No one can drink as much champagne as Garth and not be evil") and delights in shaking things up, become the guiding light behind this come-from-behind revival?

When asked how he netted the assignment, Warren is very forthcoming. "Basically, Len Kaminski got fired and I got hired. The book wasn't doing very well, it was about to be canceled, and Marie (Javins,

Hellstorm's editor) knew I was interested in taking over the book. So she offered it to me." Of course' Warren didn't realize how daunting the task he had taken on was. The startling jump cut in his first issue (#12) grew out of Warren's dissatisfaction with Kaminski's initial intentions.

"The only thing I got to work on was the last of Len's issues and the outlines for the next six months. What Len wanted to do was reveal that all the characters—the demons and angels and such—were actually space aliens. He was then going to bring the book around into the type of thing Whitley Streiber's been doing of late. I wanted no part of that bollocks; I wanted to make *Hellstorm* into the horror comic I always felt it wanted to be. So a clean break was in order. I moved the story up several weeks and decided, if you care about these characters I'll kill some of them."

Warren's murder of Avram, a character who played a big part in

Kaminski's stories was one of the big shocks in the first issue. But what may surprise some readers was the fact that Avram was not his first choice. If he had had his way, Isaac the Gargoyle would have gotten the axe. "I thought he was useless, but when I told my girlfriend, she said, 'Oh, don't do it, he's cute.' I got the same response when I told Marie. I knew where this was heading, I ended up having to take up the challenge that scared off all the other writers; of giving Issac a personality. So he's actually found his tongue again, which is good, 'cause I couldn't stand having him hanging around the mansion like a useless toe rag every issue."

The other major change in the first serial involved Jaine Cutter. Warren explains that she was designed to give Daimon balance. "When I came on he was being portrayed as such an arrogant little prick that I really felt the need for someone to keep him in check. Issac wouldn't be ready for that role for at least a

year, and Patsy (Daimon's wife) was totally useless, so I decided to create someone new. I chose to make Jaine a woman because I enjoy writing strong women characters, and I thought it was important that Daimon started having sex again. I didn't want to write him sitting naked in the fireplace moaning about the woes of the unemployed.

"The thing about Jaine is she's somebody who's on the same level as Daimon. I don't think, for example, that it belittles him by having Jaine finish off Zhagurim in issue #15. In fact, it makes her a more credible character for when she tries to contain Daimon.

"What we're going to learn about the two of them in future issues is that they come from very diverse background. While Daimon was in the monastery, Jaine was living in San Francisco doing all sorts of things. She produced records, she modeled, got involved with the entire bohemian community out there. I find relationships like that are so much more interesting because there's usually so much more each person can learn from the other. I can't think of what Daimon could learn from Patsy—how to model, I suppose.

"The thing about the Marvel Universe is that you're a non-entity if you're not wearing tights," Ellis explains in describing Daimon's investigatory methods, "so he can get away with a lot solely because nobody's noticing him."

When asked about the paraphernalia in issue #15's story 'Cigarette Dawn,' Warren chalks it up to a trip to a bookstore he once took. "My girlfriend and I like to visit bookstores on the weekends, and we found a book called *The Encyclopedia of Cruel and Unusual Punishment* at one shop. It's absolutely wicked and lists all these torture devices and where they're still being used. I just knew I had to use this stuff in a story one time. So every device in that story is true—as is the story about Christopher Haizman building this house. It still exists."

One of the overriding themes in the *Ellis Hellstorm* run is that forces which mankind thinks of as divine are just as devious as Hell's. When asked about it, Warren points to the Bible. "If you read it closely, you'll realize that God is responsible for just as much damage as Satan is. Of course He's scary." And future issues will continue to build on that suspicion: "We have a sort of anti-exorcism story coming up, with a man being possessed by an angel, and Gabriel (the defrocked cleric from Marvel's near-forgotten *Haunt of Horror* and a supporting character in the first year) will really come into his own around issue #23. It's not nice stuff." (Well, maybe not; this issue of *TSF* was about to go to press, I got word from Marie Javins that *Hellstorm* will be canceled as of issue #21. That being the case, take the next couple of paragraphs with a grain of salt)

Ellis' biggest concern is staying fresh. "I don't want to be like Peter David, who's brilliant but has a tendency to stay on a book longer than he's useful. I feel that I'm doing fine as long as I get a reaction. If I'm frightening you, great. If I'm disgusting you, fine. When I stop doing that, it's no good for the reader, and it's no good for me. My plan right now is stay on *Hellstorm* for two more years. That should give me enough time to say what I want to say."

Of course, Warren is very much aware of Daimon Hellstorm's status as Marvel property, but he views that situation with a philosophical bent. "I'm sure there are people out there who are just waiting for me to move on so they can bring him back to the time where he went around bare-chested with that lovely pentagram burnt into his chest and swishing that yellow polyester cape about. But I don't know; it would seem tacky to me. Sort of akin to Prince Charles putting on hot pants and beating up on muggers. But then, considering what's coming out about [Charles] lately, it might not be such a bad career option for him."

While *Hellstorm* is Warren's most prominent project, it's not his only

one. He has done several fill-ins for Marvel's 2009 titles ("It's just a case of changing the window dressings for 17 pages"), as well as introduced his own horror-themed character into that milieu, *Metalscream*. He has taken over the writing for both *Doom 2009* and *Excaliber* and is working on two projects for Vertigo under the aegis of Lou Stathis. One is a *Vertigo Visions* featuring old Wonder Woman foe Doctor Psycho, which Warren swears will be, "the sickest thing that imprint's ever done, provided we can sneak it past Karen. Nazi Pygmy Love Slave just about sums it up."

The other is a miniseries called *The Inspector*. "The *Inspector* is based on something called the Human Genome Project, and comes out of my fascination for genetics. I really got into the subject when I was writing *Lazarus Churchyard*, and there's all sorts of things concerning mutation that can be done that Stan Lee just never thought of. For example, it's theoretically possible to build a functioning being out of cancer. There's only one pair of chromosomes that make cancer destructive. You delete those and you've got a living thing made out of extremely tough organic tissue. So *The Inspector's* going to be my way to explore ideas like extremely weak telepaths, computers that can digitize and deconstruct human flesh, and men made of cancer."

The fact that *Hellstorm* has lasted for so long puzzles Ellis, although he has a good idea why he's been left alone. It seems the book has a large amount of support inside the organization. "I'm shocked at the kind of people who like us. Bob Harris (The editor of the X-Books) loves us. Bobbie Chase, who handles the "Midnight Sons" line, really is behind us. There's someone who has every reason to hate what we're doing, yet she's behind me."

While *Hellstorm* is about to be axed due to low sales, it's obvious that we will hear more from Warren Ellis. It takes an awful lot to keep someone this deranged out of the limelight for long.



While *Hellstorm* is really showing what mainstream comics can do, there are some intriguing things being done by the smallest of independents. A prime example is *Springheel Jack* (\$2.25; Rebel Studios). The handiwork of David Barbour and Wayne Tanaka, the initial miniseries came out roughly a year and a half ago. It told the story of July, a woman whose child and husband were murdered in a terrorist bombing. Thirsting for revenge, July cuts a deal to attract a Tulpa to serve her. The demon, calling itself 'Springheel Jack' (a demon who 'starred' in a series of horror stories in Victorian London), tracks down and kills the terrorists while avoiding the attention of Inspector Church. A subplot of the series implied that the Tulpa had possessed July's husband's body and was taking on the husband's personality.

I bought a couple of these issues when they first came out and was somewhat intrigued by the somber take on what was a pretty basic story. Now, thanks to Barbour himself, I've gotten a hold of *Springheel Jack: Revenge of the Ripper*, which continues the story while pitting its hero against another 'Springheel Jack'—the Ripper himself.

The premise is this: Jack the Ripper was actually Albert Victor, the Duke of Clarence**. Albert had fallen under the influence of a notorious necromancer and learned of a ritual that would grant him both immortality and freedom from his illnesses. Queen Victoria captured her grandson before he could complete the ritual, covered up his activities, and locked him away in a series of asylums. But Albert Victor hasn't aged, and when he escapes, Inspector Derek Church (who encountered Spring-Heel Jack in the first mini-series) is assigned to stop the near-immortal monster before he kills the Princess Diana.

Yeah, this is a pretty wacky premise, but Barbour knows of where he comes; the back story he presents is plausible within the confines of the series. And, while Barbour is an American, there is very little of those mistakes that usually pop up when American writers set their stories in England. And it's refreshing to see a series where the threads between this series and the last are strong, yet no real knowledge of the first is needed. The story goes forward at a pretty nice clip—somewhat faster than the first mini-series, in fact. In a way, Barbour is doing with Spring-Heel Jack what Marvel has tried to do with various horror characters since the '70s; he's attempting to fuse horror with super heroics in a way that will please both camps. And, because he's not tied down by continuity, Barbour is more successful. The artwork, by Wayne Tanaka, is simple and clean. Sometimes too simple; his usage of shadows needs some work. But Wayne has a couple of interesting tricks up his sleeve, especially when it comes to portraying the book's 'hero.' His design of Jack makes it plausible that people could mistake his visage for a costume, and the fact that his body is perpetually in shadow, save for a smiling, razor-toothed face, makes for some intriguing effects. In the future, though, I would suggest that

the team avoid using real-life characters in their stories; Tanaka's talent for caricature is relatively weak.

Spring-Heel Jack: Revenge of the Ripper is a fun read which has some interesting underpinnings of Eastern mysticism to give it flavor. It should appeal to both intellectuals and thrill-seekers. I hope that it won't be the last we see of this somewhat intriguing character, or its creators.

Before I say thank you and good night, allow me to indulge in a little updating. *Scarlett*, the DC Comic featuring a high schooler who becomes the Scarlet Redeemer, scourge of the Night Folk, was canceled as of issue #14. It's a pity I never got back to this book until it was too late, because writers Tom Joyner and S. Keith Wilson continued to get better with each issue until this was one of those books I actually looked forward to every month. Joyner and Wilson have been appealing to the book's fans to write in demanding a stay of execution, but it doesn't seem likely. You should still

be able to find the later issues (which feature a nightmarish clan of teen vampires reminiscent of the characters of the film *Wild in the Streets*, as well as a Lovecraftian mook sleeping underneath a mall ice rink!!) at cover price or less. Tom DeeJ says check 'em out.

That's it for this time. Let the shout-outs go to Marie Javins and Warren Ellis for talking to me about *Hellstorm*; Michael Curry, who refers to me as a 'Cult, Downtown Wallace Stevens'; Sandi DeMeo for still willing to have something to do with me even after I performed the Goony Bird dance of joy; Andy

Loewenthal, for helping me get my due at Yale Robbins; Lorraine Turi, for playing a rather combative game of ring toss; Ed Bungert for remembering SuperBlastMan, and John Benesley for helping me catalog those *X-Files* episodes. Please remember, folks, that I am presently accepting letters, comments, and review copies at 163 Third Avenue, Suite 235, New York, NY, 10003. I do not guarantee written responses, but all your words are assuredly taken under advisement.

Next issue we'll be meeting out by the rubbish tip while we examine an obscure title from a comic company known in the industry for being a thieving bag of puss. No, it's not Skywald; we're talking Now Comics and its bizarre story of a man and his junkyard, *Rust*. Until then, keep in mind that time flies when you're sleeping. Pieces.

*: I should also mention that Jeff had won his battle at the expense of a broken back, and that the 'Next Issue' box promised us the spectacle of a parapalegic Cougar. The third issue never came out, which is a pity; I'd have loved to have seen how the tale (supposedly about a Yeti-type creature) worked its way around that plot point.

** In the interest of honesty, I should mention that *Dead to the World*, my novel-in-progress (doesn't everybody have a novel in progress), also assumes the identity of Albert Victor as Jack the Ripper, although the place I take it to is radically different from Barbour's.



The devil in black and white: David Barbour and Wayne Tanaka's Springheel Jack, from *Revenge of the Ripper*.

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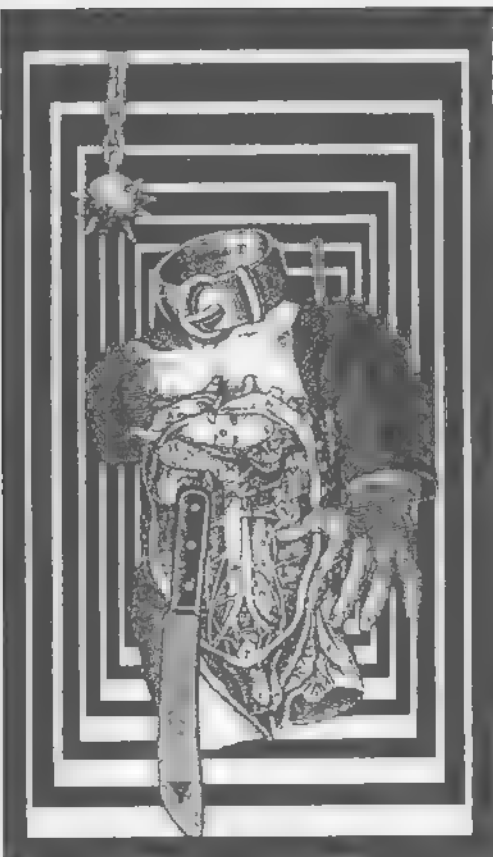
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PETER HAINING, RE-ANIMATOR

Attempting an article on Peter Haining is a daunting task. He is not only the most prolific solo anthologist in the field of horror and weird fiction, but he has compiled almost as many books again, many of them of interest to the devotee of the supernatural. For this article I am concentrating solely on his anthologies, and shall not attempt to cover his other work. At the end of this article I have appended a listing of all of his anthologies, collections and works of associational interest, and this still leaves out over fifty other books. Here is not the place to dwell upon *The Barry Manilow Scrapbook*, compiled under the Richard Peters pen name in 1982 (Haining's written nine books linked to legends of pop music, most of them about Elvis Presley). We'll avoid even a peek at *The Legend of Brigitte Bardot* (1983), or *The Spitfire Log* (1985), or even *The Traction Engine Companion* (1983). Oh yes, Peter Haining's output is extensive and varied, and some day, I dare say, the whole story will be told. But for now, let's delve into the darker recesses of anthological lore.

Some background about Peter Haining will set us on the road. He was born at Enfield, in Middlesex on April 2, 1940, and after leaving school worked as a journalist on several newspapers in Essex. One of his assignments was to investigate a case of grave desecration in a local churchyard. The Rector thought it was the work of satanists, and as a result Haining wrote a column about black magic. This sparked his interest, and so began Haining's extensive research into the occult. A few years later his research came to the attention of a publisher who asked Haining to write it up as a book. Teaming with journalist A. V. Sellwood, Haining produced *Devil Worship in Britain* (1964), his first book.

In 1965, Haining became an editor at New English Library (NEL), and this gave him the opportunity to assemble a volume of horror stories, *The Hell of Mirrors*, published just before Christmas 1965, under NEL's Four-Square Books imprint. It's a strange mixture, not like Haining's more polished anthologies, though reflecting one of his trademarks which we shall encounter frequently: that of setting the stories in chronological order and endeavouring to trace the history of a theme. In this case it was the development of horror fiction from its gothic roots to modern horror, not an easy trick in a small anthology, and one that Haining returned to later. Rather appropriately for this particular issue of *Scream Factory*,

Haining's first anthology opened with Frederick Marryatt's oft-reprinted "The Werewolf." Indeed, unlike the strengths of Haining's later volumes, this one did not seek especially rare stories, but presented, for the most part, well known ones, such as "Ligeia" and "The Black Cat" by Edgar Allan Poe, "Schalken the Painter" by Sheridan Le Fanu, "The Damned Thing" by Ambrose Bierce and "The Squaw" by Bram Stoker, plus two stories by Guy de Maupassant. Where Haining did introduce something special was in selecting two stories by Edogawa Rampo, the pseudonym of Japanese writer Taro Hirai, whose *Japanese Tales of Mystery and Imagination* had been translated in a hard-to-find volume in America in 1956. Rampo's work is still not widely known, and Haining is one of the few anthologists to have reprinted it. Almost as afterthoughts the anthology includes two recent stories reprinted from the American magazine *Fantastic*, "The Knocking in the Castle" by Henry Slesar and "The Fanatic" by Arthur Porges, to demonstrate that modern gothic fiction was alive and well.

Haining later revised some of his early anthologies, and the later version of *The Hell of Mirrors* is more satisfying, showing Haining's development as an anthologist. He retained some of the stories, though now starting the volume with Poe's "Ligeia," but he included a more representative range to demonstrate his theme. Thus we have "The Sandman" by E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come to You, My Lad" by M. R. James, "The Old Man of Visions" by Algernon Blackwood, "The Nameless City" by H.P. Lovecraft, "That Hell-Bound Train" by Robert Bloch, and "Danse Macabre" by Mervyn Peake. What all of these stories have in common are a dream-like horror, which is a much closer theme than Haining highlights.

Most of Haining's early anthologies lack that rarity of content that epitomizes his later volumes. It is true that in the mid-sixties there was less horror fiction around and many readers would not be so aware of the writers, but the dedicated reader would. *Where Nightmares Are* and *Summoned from the Tomb* contain predominantly out-of-copyright material, with a small nod to *Weird Tales*, but include little that was special. The one real surprise was the use of "Purple Eyes" by Clive Pemberton in *Summoned from the Tomb*. Pemberton was a newspaperman who wrote a number of fairly standard but intriguing odd turn-of-the-century stories, some of which were collected as *The Weird o' It* (1906), but he's been overlooked by all other anthologists.

Haining used another Pemberton story in what I consider

the best of his early anthologies, *Beyond the Curtain of Dark*, a bumper 320-page volume, with 24 stories. Haining was still working on this theme of the development of horror during the last 200 years, and this time introduces his book as "what amounts to the most representative selection of horror and fantasy stories that has ever appeared in paperbacks." He probably wasn't far wrong. By the mid-sixties, although some good anthologies had appeared in hardcover—Bryan Netherwood's *Medley Macabre* being the best—none of these had reappeared in paperback. And most paperback anthologies were printing run-of-the-mill material familiar to all but the newest neophyte. In *Beyond the Curtain of Dark*, Haining took the paperback anthology by the scruff of the neck and made it look respectable.

It's probably fair to say that Haining made a significant contribution to the acceptance of horror fiction by the book-seller trade, but it was an up-hill struggle. "I know—I was part of this change at NEL," Haining told me. "The reps and the trade took a lot of convincing that horror was not something unmentionable that would frighten the kids!"

NEL were already reprinting some collections by Robert Bloch (*Horror-7*) and Ray Bradbury (*The October Country*, *The Small Assassin*), as well as some of the anthologies by August Derleth, upon which Haining was clearly modelling his work. All of these authors advised Haining and offered suggestions, which was of considerable value. Bloch is represented twice in *Beyond the Curtain of Dark* with "Lizzie Borden Took an Axe" and "Return to the Sabbath," as is Derleth, with his Lovecraftian collaborations "The Survivor" and "The Ancestor." Bradbury only gets one slot, "Fever Dream." These are all good stories, but the strength of the anthology is in the lesser known and certainly less reprinted stories. The Ambrose Bierce selection, this time, is "Chickamauga," one of his most powerful but least known stories. Then there was W. C. Morrow's "The Monster Maker," which had not previously appeared in Britain in book form. Haining has since reprinted it himself several times. Henry Kuttner's "By These Presents" had appeared in his collection *Ahead of Time*, which NEL reprinted, but this is its only known reprint, despite it being an excellent deal-with-the-devil story. "Whosits Disease" by Henry Slesar is another rarity, a sardonic piece about medicine and murder, culled from the pages of *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*. There is another Edogawa Rampo story, "The Human Chair," a strange piece about a man who hides in chair and finds himself becoming increasingly part of it. Overall, *Beyond the Curtain of Dark* is an excellent blend of classic, new, and rare fiction and would be a credit to any anthologist today.

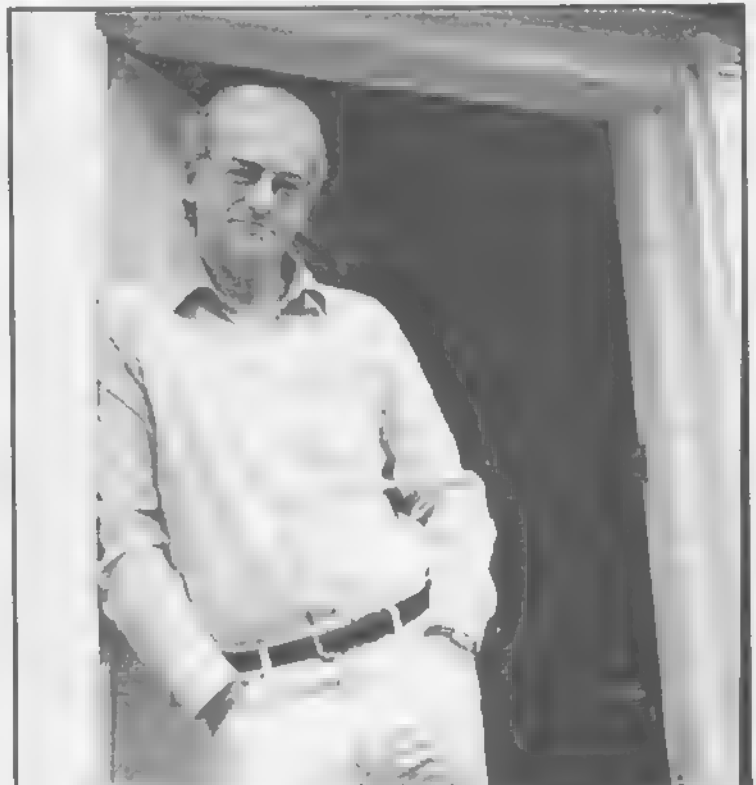
One other anthology from this period, *The Craft of Terror*, is perhaps most representative of one course Haining would take over the next few years. Promoted as a "Four Square Gothic Mystery," the book traces the development of the gothic story from its earliest days to the dawn of the horror short story. The volume is mostly extracts from novels, such as *The Monk* by M.G. Lewis, *The Castle of Otranto* by Walpole, *Vathek* by William Beckford and *Melmoth the Wanderer* by Charles Maturin, plus less well known items as *Caleb Williams* by William Godwin, *The Last Man* by Mary Shelley, and *Zanoni* by Lord Lytton. It's not a bad little volume, because along with its story blurbs (the first good ones Haining had written) and a helpful bibliography of other gothic horror novels, it is a good introduction to gothic fiction. It must also

have served as a good promotional item for NEL, as they had only recently reprinted many of the novels excerpted.

While at NEL, Haining obtained permission to issue a number of Alfred Hitchcock anthologies. These he compiled with the help of his fellow editors by selecting stories from *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*. So far as I know there are seven of them. They contain mostly mystery stories, though all with that macabre Hitchcock kick. The first book was *Guaranteed Rest in Peace*, the title taken from a story of filial devotion by Bryce Walton. The series includes an excellent psychological horror story, "The Thing in the Closet" by Don Tothe, one of August Derleth's Solar Pons detective stories, "The Adventure of the Haunted Library," and an ingenious use of the space-age for murder in "Countdown" by David Ely. There are other fine stories by Jack Sharkey, Arthur Porges, Rog Phillips and Jack Ritchie, plus a Frederik Pohl-Cyril Kornbluth collaboration, "A Hint of Henbane."

By their nature, the Hitchcock anthologies are not typical of Haining's work, though they are on the whole a good selection. Many well known writers are included, amongst them Robert Sheckley, Donald Westlake, Hal Ellson, Talmage Powell, Hugh B. Cave, Richard Levinson and William Link, Robert Bloch and Avram Davidson, most with stories you'll not have seen elsewhere. There's even the odd supernatural story tucked away, such as "Mirror, Mirror" by Pauline K. Prilucik, in *Meet Death at Night*, about a mirror that is the link between life and death.

Haining's career as an anthologist really took off with *The Gentlewomen of Evil*. Not only was this his first hardcover anthology, and the first to be reprinted in the United States, it was the first to be structured in the way we've come to know his books. It wasn't the first anthology to deliberately select stories solely by women writers—Alex Hamilton had done that



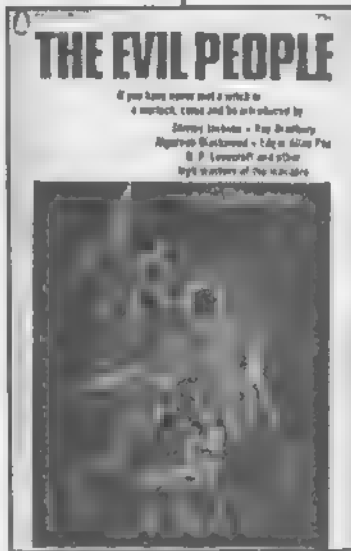
Peter Haining, taking a rare break from his work

the year before with *The Cold Embrace*—but Haining's volume was presented as a more complete work. It was also his first genuinely thematic anthology, selecting solely stories by Victorian women writers. What also adds to the pleasure of this anthology are a number of inset plates reprinting photographs and art from the Victorian era. It's something sadly lacking in most modern anthologies.

The Gentlewomen of Evil is a good selection, spanning the Victorian era, starting with Mary Shelley's "Transformation" from 1830 and ending with Gertrude Bacon's "The Gorgon's Head" from 1899. In both cases Haining was the first to resurrect these stories, though it was a close shave as Sam Moskowitz also used them in a couple of his Alden Norton ghost-edited volumes. Although the anthology's subtitle declares these stories to be "rare," that is not always true. Mrs. Oliphant's "The Open Door," Mrs. Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story," and Amelia Edwards's "The Phantom Coach" had all been anthologized many times. But Haining did select some lesser-known stories, like Mrs. Riddell's "Sandy the Tinker," L. T. Meade's "Eyes of Terror," and Mrs. Molesworth's "At the Dip of the Road." He takes one liberty by assuming that the anonymous author of "A Tale of a Gas-light Ghost" is a woman. It's certainly possible. The story originally appeared in the *New Christmas Annual for 1867* (published Christmas 1866) which bore the title *Ghosts' Wives: A String of Strange Stories Told Round a Christmas Fire by Six Young Widows and a Spinster of a Certain Age*, so unless there was some editorial license there (and I suspect there was), Haining could well be right. But it's a sign of Haining's own editorial license and a degree of initiative (or perhaps liberty) he would take, which has increased over his career.

Haining's output by now was becoming prodigious. If we exclude the Hitchcock volumes, Haining had had one anthology in 1965, four in 1966, and one again in 1967. But in 1968 he had five, and would keep an average of four or five a year for most of the next twenty years. There's no way I can cover them all here, but because a number fall satisfactorily into certain groups or series, it is possible to treat them in that way.

The first of these is what I think of as his "People" series—not to be confused with Zenna Henderson's. It hasn't helped that one of the series has since been reprinted several times as *Vampires at Midnight*, but the books were originally conceived under the titles *The Evil People*, *The Midnight People* and *The Unspeakable People*. *The Evil People* is a volume of stories about black magic and witchcraft, and despite being a good mixture of old and new, it is in my view the weakest of the series. Among the rarer items are "The Devil Worshipper" by Francis Prevot and "Cerimarie" by Arthur J. Burks (originally published as "Voodoo" by Estil Critchley). There is also "The Snake" by Dennis Wheatley, "Prince Borgias's Mass" by August Derleth, "Secret Worship" by Algernon Blackwood, "Mother of Serpents" by Robert Bloch, "The Witch" by Shirley Jackson, and "Homecoming" by Ray Bradbury, none of which are rare stories but neither were they easily available then. Haining also presented a new story by Basil Copper, "Archives of the Dead," one of four original stories Haining would commission at that time. Copper's *Not After Nightfall* had just been published by NEL, and had given Haining another contact.



We see a few of Haining's minor liberties in this volume. "The Peabody Heritage" is included, credited solely to Lovecraft, although it is almost wholly the work of Derleth. W. Harrison Ainsworth's "The Nocturnal Meeting" is presented as a story, rather than an extract from *The Lancashire Witches*. In fact Haining would use the same extract a few years later in *The Necromancers*, though here he called it "The Midnight Assembly."

The Midnight People is the vampire anthology, and it's a good one. It includes another new Basil Copper story, "Dr. Porthos," and amongst the reprints, "An Episode of Cathedral History" by M.R. James, "And No Bird Sings" by E.F. Benson, "The Drifting Snow" by Stephen Grendon (Derleth was present again under his own name with his less effective first sale "Bat's Belfry"), "When It Was Moonlight"

by Manly Wade Wellman, "Over the River" by P. Schuyler Miller, "Drink My Blood" by Richard Matheson, "Pillar of Fire" by Ray Bradbury, "The Living Dead" by Robert Bloch, and "The Girl With the Hungry Eyes" by Fritz Leiber, all good stories. Of the other items, "The Vampire of Croglin Grange," an extract from Augustus Hare's autobiography, was certainly not as well known then as it is now. "The Vampyre" by John Polidori had already started to be regularly reprinted, and Haining would use it again himself. "The Storm Visitor" is an extract from *Varney the Vampyre* that was still, at this stage, attributed to Thomas Preskett Prest (which was the prevailing view at the time). Even though the story is now regarded as the work of Malcolm Rymmer, the accreditation has not been changed in recent reprints of the anthology. "Three Young Ladies" by Bram Stoker is, of course, that well known episode from *Dracula* when Jonathan Harker is visited by three of Dracula's victims. Finally, there is "The Believer" by Sydney Horler, which is Haining's retitled of "The Vampire," first anthologised in *Fifty Masterpieces of Mystery* (1937).

The Unspeakable People is to my mind the best of the series. It's a volume of stories that were either banned or caused an outcry at the time of publication, or were rejected at some stage by publishers as being too horrible to publish. By today's standards the stories are fairly innocuous, but in bringing them together Haining allows us to trace changes in the public's taste over the decades, and to consider what the writers were seeking to develop. It's an anthology that could easily be updated to show trends in the last twenty years. In some cases Haining took a liberty. There was no particular outcry when R. H. Benson's "My Own Tale" was published, but of course Benson himself had caused a furor by converting from the Church of England to Catholicism, and remember his father was the Archbishop of Canterbury. Also "The Coffin" by Dennis Wheatley is actually an extract from *The Ka of Gifford Hillary*, and never caused any outcry that I can recall. But others are stories genuinely rejected at some stage for their horror: "Williamson" by Henry S. Whitehead, "A Thing of Beauty" by Wallace West, "Bianca's Hands" by Theodore Sturgeon; or which caused an outcry, such as "The Loved Dead" by C. M. Eddy, and "The Copper Bowl" by George Elliot. Haining concluded the volume with a new story by Laurence James, "Mercy," clearly written to shock and which had been rejected by a half-dozen or so magazines. Compared to much

of the blood and gore that has appeared in the last decade or so this story is relatively mild, but it's a good example of current fashion.

There was a fourth book scheduled for the series, *The Infamous People*, but the publisher went bust before it could be published. The project has remained in Haining's files until it was recently revamped and revised as *Tales from the Rogues Gallery* due any moment, as I write, from Little, Brown.

In the early seventies, Haining wrote a number of non-fiction books about black magic and witchcraft, and some of his anthologies in the late sixties served almost as precursors to these in developing an understanding of the subject. Following *The Evil People*, Haining produced an inter-linked series: *The Satanists*, *The Necromancers* and *The Magicians*. Though they were all produced at different times for different publishers, they all follow a theme of presenting stories about black magic or by occultists. *The Satanists* was the first and was compiled over a period of four years (1965-1969), growing out of Haining's original research on grave desecration. This anthology is the weakest of the series, and certainly promises more than it delivers. Apart from non-fiction from Montague Summers on the black mass, some newspaper clippings about satanic practices, and Aleister Crowley's own account of an initiation ceremony, the rest are fairly mild stories, including a few lesser known ones: "The Sanctuary" by E.F. Benson, "No News Today" by Cleve Cartmill and "The Watcher from the Sky" by Derleth, and several well known ones, such as "Ancient Sorceries" by Blackwood and "The Book" by Margaret Irwin.

The Necromancers is far more successful in what it was seeking to achieve although, because I am not overly fond of stories of black magic, I do not find it an especially interesting volume. Nevertheless, Haining has assembled here a very representative cross-section of stories and factual accounts of black magic, intermingled so as to make the fact blur with the fiction. Here you will find some genuinely rare items, including, amongst the stories, "The Black Lodge" by Aleister Crowley, "Gavon's Eve" by E. F. Benson, "The Little Friend" by August Derleth, "The Tarn of Sacrifice" by Algernon Blackwood, and "At the Heart of It" by Michael Harrison. Robert Bloch not only provides an introduction, but also a lesser known story from *Playboy*, "Beelzebub." There is also an extract from Lawrence Flammenberg's novel *The Necromancer* (1792), at that stage long out of print and hard to find. For the devotee of black magic fiction, it's a good volume.

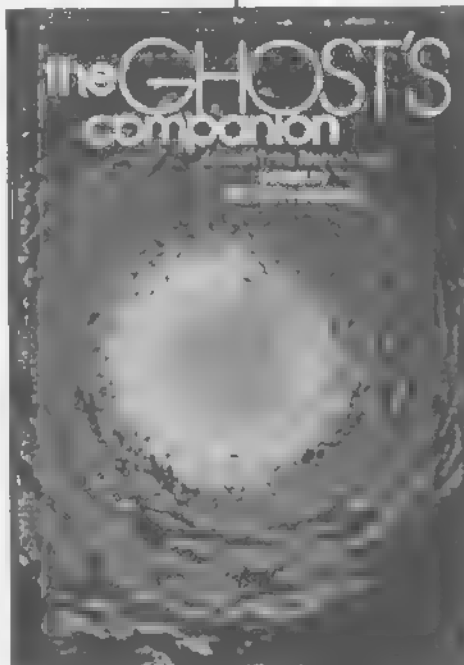
It also contains the first blatant liberty I have seen Haining take. The volume includes the story "The Witch-Baiter," credited to Robert Anthony. The name didn't register at first, but a little digging showed that this story is by R. Anthony from *Weird Tales*, December, 1927. In the volume's acknowledgements, Haining personally thanks "the following" for their help in compiling the book, including "R. Anthony, for *The Witch Baiter* (c) 1938." I've no idea where that date comes from. The story was

reprinted in *By Daylight Only* in Britain in 1929 and included from that in *The Not at Night Omnibus* in 1937, from which Haining may have selected it, and been a year off in his acknowledgement. But where did he get the name Robert Anthony from, and how could he have helped him with the book? R. Anthony was for a long time assumed to be a pseudonym of Anthony M. Rud, a regular writer for the pulps who contributed several stories to the early issues of *Weird Tales*. Rud had died in 1942, so would have been precious little help to Haining. However, Sam Moskowitz (who has the acquisition files for *Weird Tales*) recently revealed that R. Anthony was the alias of Richard Muttowski of Detroit, a complete unknown who never even had a letter printed in *Weird Tales*!

Let us move on to *The Magicians*. This is perhaps the most satisfying of the trilogy, because here Haining has made a genuine attempt to find stories written by adepts or at least initiates into occult practices. Colin Wilson provides an informative introduction, and Haining some revealing story blurbs, and the stories themselves hint at real worlds darker than what we have experienced. The authors include several obvious ones—H.P. Blavatsky, Aleister Crowley, W. B. Yeats, Dion Fortune; some obvious only when one is reminded that they had joined occult sects—Algernon Blackwood and Arthur Machen; and some rather more indirect—Lewis Spence, Conan Doyle and Sax Rohmer. Because of my interest in the life of Algernon Blackwood, I was fascinated by Haining's comment in the introduction to "With Intent to Steal" that the story "is based on a true occurrence. The author was indeed asked to help in an occult experiment to combat the spirit of a black magician which was still terrorizing his former residence." I don't doubt that it was based on a true occurrence, but in all my research in sixteen years on Blackwood I have never found a reference to this. I asked Haining where the datum came from, but he could not recall, thinking he may have encountered it in the writings of Lewis Spence. Spence was immensely prolific and I have far from completed reading his works, so I live in hope. Has anyone else encountered this reference?

Haining later compiled *The Black Magic Omnibus*, though this is a fairly routine volume of stories using occult motifs, and is not as satisfying as the earlier trilogy, which at least related the accounts to the authors' experiences or beliefs. The same is true of an odd little volume, *The Witchcraft Reader*, which is anything but that. Okay, it's eight stories involving witchcraft and wizardry, and they're all good stories, but if you know "Timothy" by Keith Roberts, "The Witch" by A.E. van Vogt, "All the Devils in Hell" by John Brunner, "One Foot and the Grave" by Theodore Sturgeon, "Broomstick Ride" by Robert Bloch and "The Mad Wizards of Mars" by Ray Bradbury, you will know these are anything but traditional witchcraft stories.

Much better was *A Circle of Witches*, which is really a continuation of the series, though now considering female practitioners. This is also a mixture of fiction and non-fiction about the theory



and practice of witchcraft from writers in the last century and early part of this. It includes some rare material, much of it fascinating, by Catherine Crowe, Amelia Edwards, Anna Bonus Kingsford, Mrs Baillie Reynolds, H. D. Everett, Beatrice Heron-Maxwell and Jessie Adelaide Middleton. For some reason, the excerpt from *The Amber Witch* by Wilhelm Meinhold is credited solely to its translator, Lady Duff Gordon, presumably to keep in with the female theme. But likewise, "The Witch of the Marsh," which was by H. B. Marriott-Watson, was attributed to Ethel Marriott-Watson. The three previous reprintings of this story had been rightly credited to H.B., but all subsequent reprintings (except Hugh Lamb's in *Victorian Nightmares*, which gives the right authorship), credits it to Ethel. Clearly these other editors lifted the story from Haining's anthology.

One of Haining's best series was his exploration of weird fiction throughout the British Isles. The first to appear was *The Wild Night Company*, 22 *Irish Tales of Terror*. Haining takes some liberties, because by his definition the stories don't have to be by Irish writers but can include stories set in Ireland. This results in the inclusion of "The Dead Smile" by F. Marion Crawford, who, so far as I know, had no connections with Ireland at all. Similarly he includes Lovecraft's "The Moon-Bog"! But all the same, it's quite a good selection, starting with a 12th Century account of an Irish werewolf, and ending with an almost new story by Ray Bradbury, "A Wild Night in Galway." Bradbury also contributes an introduction. The first half of the anthology is more folklore than fiction with accounts by T. Crofton Croker, Lady Wilde, William Carleton and others, but there are also good genuine Irish fantasy and horror stories by Sheridan Le Fanu, George Moore, James Joyce, Lord Dunsany, Shane Leslie, Elliott O'Donnell and Sinead de Valera.

Haining returned to the Emerald Isle for *Great Irish Stories of the Supernatural*, which is a more complete anthology, with a wider range of stories, and with most of them being that much rarer. He has also recently compiled *Great Irish Tales of the Unimaginable*, a rather odd title for a volume that explores the full limit of the Irish imagination by assembling tales drawn from Irish legend and myth. It includes some rare material by James Stephens, Ella Young, Lord Dunsany, Austin Clarke, a welcome reprint by the much neglected Mervyn Wall, and a new story by Peter Tremayne amongst its 24 selections.

In his original sequence, Haining moved on to Scotland with *The Clans of Darkness*. Haining takes less liberties in this volume. Most of the stories are either by Scottish writers or those with strong connections. Again the early stories are based more on folklore, and generally the stories are less satisfying than the Irish volume, although there are some very powerful ones, including "The Outgoing of the Tide" by John Buchan, "The Wolves of God" by Algernon Blackwood, "Music When Soft Voices Die..." by John Keir Cross and "Sealskin Trousers" by Eric Linklater. It's still one of the best representative anthologies of Scottish weird fiction I know.

The Magic Valley Travellers was the next in the sequence, exploring Welsh horror and fantasy. I find this the best of the



set, yet unaccountably this volume did not make it into paperback. There are some terrible liberties taken—almost excusable, but I still think John Wyndham's "A Stray from Cathay" has no place here. But it's fascinating to see H. G. Wells's "The Chronic Argonauts," the forerunner to *The Time Machine*, and also Robert Bloch's "The Dark Isle." With the latter I am sure true Cymry would wince at Bloch's immature understanding of the Welsh (he was only 22 when it was published), but it's a rare story which is intriguing to read. The other contents, leaving aside the folklore, are all good examples of Welsh imagination, particularly "The Corpse Candle" by Wirt Sikes, "The Gift of Tongues" by Arthur Machen, "The Coffin" by Caradoc Evans and "The Stranger" by Richard Hughes.

When Haining turned his mind to England, it was less easy. Unlike the other parts of the British Isles, where the true natives of Britain live, the English have no single identity. He could have broken it down into Cornish, and Yorkshire and so on, but instead he went the other way and developed what was his most ambitious project of all, and this was to trace the development of gothic fiction throughout Britain, the Continent and into America. Since by definition "gothic" fiction can hardly be British, it is perhaps a tortuous route, but it is a fascinating one.

In effect Haining was now making thorough what he had started with *The Craft of Terror*. The full single volume of *Gothic Tales of Terror* was only published in America, the British editions being split into two. The first was *Great British Tales of Terror*. I find this volume fascinating from the perspective of a student of weird fiction, but boring as a reader. Whereas gothic fiction fascinated Montague Summers and clearly others, it bores me. But I am interested in the writers, and Haining does a good job here in presenting rare items and tracing the development of the genre. I won't dwell too much on the content, which spans the years roughly from the 1760s to the 1840s. For the student of gothic fiction there is some fascinating stuff, though also some annoying blunders. I don't know whether this was Haining again taking liberties or being clumsy. For instance, he attributes "The Nymph of the Fountain" to William Beckford. The story is actually by the German Johann-Karl Musäus, and though the English translation of his works, *Popular Tales of the Germans* (1791) has been attributed to Beckford, that has never been confirmed. Likewise "The Demon of the Hartz" is attributed to Thomas Peckett Prest. Haining may have lifted it from a source linked with Prest, but the story is a translation of the German story "Waldeck," and is probably the one done by Sir Walter Scott.

The second volume, *Great Tales of Terror from Europe and America* is better because it starts at the real heart of gothic fiction and provides a good selection of stories by Goethe, Schiller, Bürger, Tieck, Fouqué, Musäus and Schreier which are otherwise very hard to find. The German selection in fact is ample as a viable anthology in its own right. The French selection is much weaker, but the American selection is better, with a rare story by Charles Brockden Brown, "Carwin the Biloquist," and some good but reasonably well known stories by Hawthorne, Irving, Charles Hoffman, and Poe. He also

includes, rather oddly, "Hugues, the Wer-Wolf" by Sutherland Menzies, about whom next to nothing is known beyond some conjecture by Montague Summers, who seeks to link Menzies with a British writer Elizabeth Stone. The story itself is set in Britain, in fact in the Weald of Kent during the 12th Century, and is one of the earliest complete werewolf stories, clearly drawn from legend. It's scarcely gothic, and it's scarcely American, but it's an historically important story.

One other volume loosely fits in this series—*Ghost Tour*, one of a series Haining assembled for William Kimber. It's subtitled "An armchair journey through the supernatural." I'm not quite sure I wholly believe the blurb, which states that "Over the years Peter Haining has travelled extensively throughout Britain, Europe and America in search of tales of ghostly dread. This collection contains the very cream of his discoveries." In his introduction Haining is more open, stating that he acquired some books whilst on his travels to Europe (in his 'teens) and America (in his twenties), which is much more realistic than imagining him scouring the world for rare fiction. In fact the selection provided here is rather more homely, and not especially ethnically obscure. The stories start in East Anglia with M.R. James's "A Warning to the Curious," and move around England to Scotland, Ireland and Wales, before heading off to France ("In Letters of Fire" by Gaston Leroux), Germany ("The Doppelganger" by Hoffmann) and Austria ("The Man on the Bottle" by Meyrink), finishing with three stories set in America. Although they are all good stories, none of them especially captures the essence of the land, except perhaps the M.R. James story. I would like to see Haining produce a definitive volume (or maybe volumes) presenting rare stories which do reflect the true nature of countries around the world. One from each country in Europe would be a good start, and then perhaps Asia, North and South America, and Australia. There's probably almost enough to reflect Africa, as well.

Once Haining had completed *Gothic Tales of Terror*, there was almost an inevitable sequel, which was to trace horror through the popular and cheap fiction of the day. This leads to Haining's next sequence of anthologies, which contain a wide range of material.

They start with *The Penny Dreadful*, the nickname given to cheap sensationalistic chapbooks of the mid-Victorian era that developed the "blood and thunder" school of fiction. These are all rare stories, most deservedly so, but Haining is presenting here a good sample of what most of the Victorian populace who could read, enjoyed, and which provided us with many of our stereotypes. Perhaps the best known character to emerge from these is that of Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber, and Haining presents a good extract from the story that started the legend, *The String of Pearls* by Thomas Peckett Prest. Also present, not surprisingly, is an extract from *Varney the Vampyre*, now properly credited to Rymer. There are also extracts from *The Life of Dick Turpin*, *Robin Hood and Little John*, *Guy Fawkes*, or *Gunpowder, Treason and Plot*

and *Dombey and Daughter*¹.

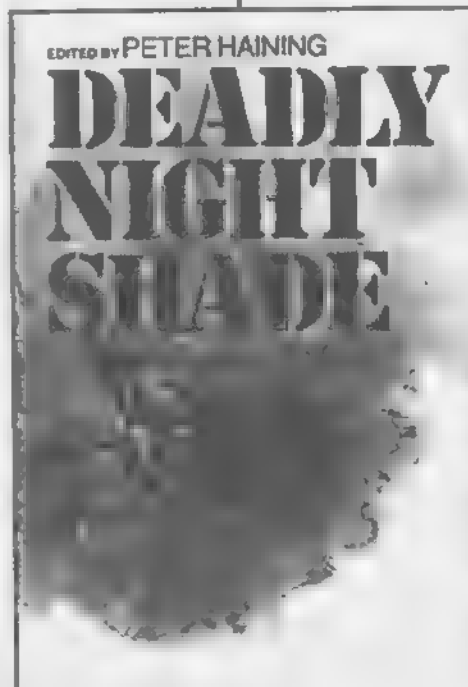
A few years later, Haining produced *The Shilling Shockers*, which contained even rarer items from more expensive and thus less prolific chapbooks. These were known as bluebooks as opposed to the penny dreadful yellowbacks, and were close to the American dime novels. Here Haining found more supernatural fodder than in the earlier volume, and was able to present a good chain-rattling ghost story in "The Spectre Mother," a vampire story in "The Bride of the Isles," a witchcraft story in the rather unlikely entitled "The Lunatic and His Turkey," and a wehr-wolf story in "The Severed Arm."

In the meantime, Haining had produced *The Fantastic Pulps*. This volume draws heavily on the research of Sam Moskowitz, and selected mystery, science-fiction and horror stories from the pulps. It almost tries to do too much and as a result the selection is too limited. It does not compare favorably with Tony Goodstone's excellent *The Pulps* which gives a wider but more representative selection. The most interesting selections are two lesser known stories by Dashiell Hammett and MacKinlay Kantor, but otherwise anyone who has collected anthologies or magazines reprinting from the pulps is likely to have most of these stories, which include "A Thousand Deaths" by Jack London, "The Resurrection of Jimber Jaw" by Edgar Rice Burroughs, "John Ovington Returns" by Max Brand, "The People of the Pit" by Abraham Merritt, "The Wolf-Woman" by H. Bedford-Jones, and a mixture from the sf and terror pulps. If you've had no grounding in the pulps at all then this would be a good introductory volume.

The final anthology in this sequence is also one of Haining's best. *Weird Tales* is a direct facsimile reproduction of stories (and adverts) from the unique magazine, and as such brings with it all the atmosphere and flavor of the pulp. It's an excellent volume with a very representative selection of stories. If you don't have it, make sure you get the Neville Spearman original or the Xanadu reprint (which is identical and not revised as it declares), and not the Sphere paperback edition, which was not in facsimile form and was split into two volumes.

There was to have been another volume in this series. In 1979, Haining delivered to NEL *Blood and Thunder*, an illustrated history of the first superheroes, which was based heavily on Haining's collection of turn-of-the-century dime novels. The book related in words and pictures the stories of Robin Hood, Dick Turpin, Buffalo Bill, Deadwood Dick, Jack Harkaway, Sexton Blake, Nick Carter and Frank Reade. It reached as far as proof stage, but for some reason it never appeared. Two other books which did appear and can be loosely linked to this series are the excellent illustrated books of pulp and macabre art: *Terror!* and *Mystery!*.

I've not yet mentioned Haining's interest in freaks and monsters, but this has provided a rich vein for anthologies from some of his earliest right through to the recent *Frankenstein Omnibus*. The sequence can almost be stretched back as far as *Dr. Caligari's Black Book*, which really focused on performances, whether at



sideshows, carnivals, waxworks, museums, circuses or séances, but within it are presented a few freaks. This anthology is also the starting point for a tour of Haining's theatre, tv and film anthologies, which I'll come back to later.

Following this came *The Freak Show*, an anthology I've always thought was slightly in bad taste, though it contains many good stories. In addition to the obvious "Freaks" by Tod Robbins, there are stories about dwarves, giants, and other evolutionary freaks, though it continues the theme of *Dr. Caligari's Black Book* with other sideshow stories like Joseph Payne Brennan's "Levitation" and Dylan Thomas's "After the Fair." Haining later produced a sequel to this to tie in with the success of the film *The Elephant Man*, called *The Elephant Man and Other Freaks* (still in bad taste), issued under his Sean Richards alias. It uses some of the same stories, and the additional ones were nothing special, apart from Bloch's "Unheavenly Twin" and Bradbury's "Heavy Set." Fans of Val Lewton might like the volume because it reprints his rare "The Bagheeta."

The Monster Makers took a giant step forward to consider the creation of life, and contains stories about mesmerism trying to prolong life (you can guess that one), early robots ("The Dancing Partner" and "Moxon's Master"), artificial life ("The Incubator Man" Wallace West) and bodily reconstruction ("Herbest West, Reanimator"). Not surprisingly Haining uses Morrow's "The Monster Maker" again. This is quite a good anthology though the theme rambles so much it gets rather messy. Quite how Asimov's "Robot AL-76 Goes Astray" crept in, I do not know, but the others are all good variations on a theme.

Haining later ghost-edited *Tales of a Monster Hunter* for Peter Cushing. This looks at the theme from another angle, selecting beings which typify a range of monster films, most of which Cushing had appeared in. So we have the vampire in "Dracula's Guest," the Yeti in Nesvadba's "In the Footsteps of the Abominable Snowman," the mummy in Doyle's "The Ring of Thoth," the gorgon in Gertrude Bacon's "The Gorgon," the ghoul in Arlen's "The Ghoul of Golder's Green" and the werewolf in Blish's "There Shall Be No Darkness."

Returning to hand-made monsters, in 1977 Haining produced *The Frankenstein File*. This was less of an anthology but more an illustrated scrapbook, rather like his very successful *Sherlock Holmes Scrapbook* (which has sold more copies than any of his other books), and other such compendia that he had started to assemble. The volume contains some interesting early rare items, but most of it concentrates on the film angle, though it also reprints yet again, Morrow's "The Monster Maker" and Harry Harrison's "At Last, the True Story of Frankenstein," which Haining has used at least four times.

They all come back together for a grand reunion in *The Frankenstein Omnibus*, which whilst a fascinating volume offers little that Haining hadn't offered before. This time Morrow's "The Monster-Maker" is given its original title

of "The Surgeon's Experiment" just so it looks new. Otherwise many of the stories are ones Haining has used before. There are one or two additions, including some adaptations of film scripts, although Guy Preston's version of "The Bride of Frankenstein," Haining had used in *Movie Monsters*, another of his dual-theme volumes.

It seems strange for an editor who claims that he tries to present rare and new stories to recycle certain stories so many times himself. In his defense, Haining has made the following point. "I think it is very easy for specialists like you and I to fall into the trap of imagining everyone who picks up a horror anthology is as familiar with the genre as we are. Having been producing collections for over a quarter of a century, I have become very aware from letters that each decade brings along new readers discovering the genre afresh. I never want to be accused of overlooking them and hence my use of certain tales more than once. Your comments are quite fair where those of us who are longer in the tooth are concerned, but each new reader needs a grounding in what makes the genre so popular and enduring, I believe."

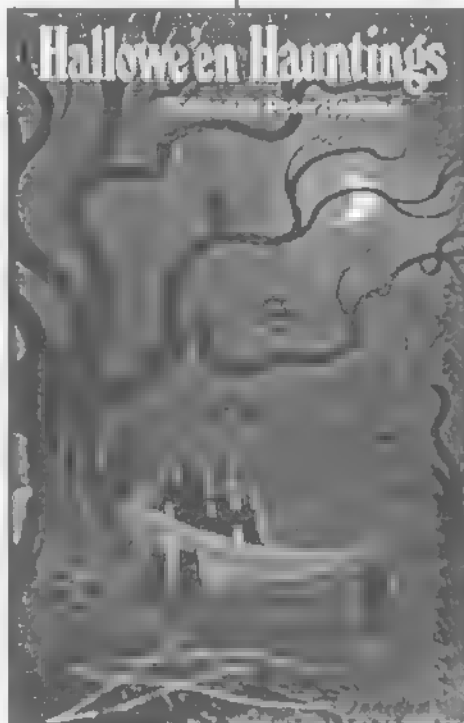
So, to redress this balance let's look at those anthologies where Haining went out of his way to present rare material.

Three of these fit into the series of *Unknown Tales of Horror*, though the paperback titles of these have been, for some reason, confusingly turned around to become *Tales of Unknown Horror*!

In his introduction to the first volume Haining emphasises the point that the series will print only stories "which have never previously appeared in volume form." This presumably means they have only previously had magazine publication. In fact, almost by way of authentication, Haining reprints the original blurbs that introduced the stories. However, what he doesn't say is that the stories may have previously been reprinted in magazines! Anyway, it's relatively easy to check this assertion.

The first volume contains twelve stories. My eyes settle immediately on "The Cosy Room" by Arthur Machen. This one is only too obvious because it's the title story of Machen's 1936 collection. Haining gives as its source *T.P.'s Weekly* for May, 1908, and I suppose I should check that out in case it did originally appear there, though my Goldstone & Sweetser Machen bibliography does not list that. My earliest record of the story is in Cynthia Asquith's anthology *Shudders* (1929), from which it was reprinted in *A Century of Creepy Stories* (1934), *World's Greatest Mystery Stories* (1943) and *John Hardie's Twenty-Two Strange Stories* (1946), making at least five book appearances.

That is the worst excess in the volume, but it's not alone. Haining may have been the first to reprint "The Sepulchre of Jasper Saracen" by H. Russell Wakefield in Britain, but it had been included in Wakefield's *Arkham House volume Strayers From Sheol* (1961). Bram Stoker's "The Crystal Cup" had been included in George Locke's *The Land of the Unseen* (1973), admittedly a small-press book with limited distribution, but



a "volume" all the same. Robert E. Howard's "The Little People" had only appeared in magazine form, that is true, but just six years earlier. It was one of his seemingly endless unpublished stories and first appeared in the January, 1970 issue of *Coven 13*. Henry S. Whitehead's "Scar Tissue" was another story not published until some years after the author's death, this time in the July, 1946 *Amazing Stories*, but it was also included in his Arkham collection *West India Lights* (1946), and had been reprinted in the October, 1967 *Amazing Stories*. Perhaps the one significant scoop in this volume is "The Hero of the Plague" by W.C. Morrow, which is not a variant title for "The Monster Maker." For although this story had appeared in Morrow's 1897 collection *The Ape, the Idiot and Other People* it hadn't been reprinted since, and so was a worthy discovery.

So far the record is not too good. But the rest is correct. Haining was the first to print in book form the following: "The Horror Undying" by Manly Wade Wellman, "The Machine That Changed History" by Robert Bloch, "Unholy Hybrid" by William Bankier, "Ten Minutes on a June Morning" by Francis Clifford, and "They're Playing Our Song" by Harry Harrison. This is also true of "The Candle" by Ray Bradbury, though he doesn't add that this story was completed by Henry Kuttner.

This game continues in the second volume, though Haining's hit rate of unreprinted stories is higher. Nevertheless "The Reanimated Englishman" by Mary Shelley had just been reprinted in her *Collected Tales and Stories* (1976). Lovecraft's chapter in the round-robin story "The Challenge from Beyond" had been included in Moskowitz's anthology *Horrors Unknown* in 1971. William F. Temple's "The Whispering Gallery" had been included in *Zacherly's Midnight Snacks* in 1960. Also including new stories is cheating, I feel, since whilst they clearly are "unknown," the concept of the series was discovering rare/lost stories, not presenting new ones. So the inclusion of Tim Stout's "The Dracula File" is unfair, though using Rosemary Timperley's "The Tunnel," previously only broadcast on radio, is fair game and eminently sensible, and I wish more radio stories were brought into print. Finally, including Stephen King's "The Cat from Hell" is a cheap trick, since the story had only appeared a year earlier in the June, 1977 *Cavalier*. Haining was pipped at the post, anyway, as Terry Carr included it in his *Year's Finest Fantasy* a month or two earlier.

The third volume suffers similarly by Haining using either relatively new stuff or unexceptional old material. He also boos by attributing "The Spider's Eye" from the July, 1856 *Putnam's* to Fitz-James O'Brien, even though a little delving into Moskowitz will tell you the story was later found to be written by Lucretia P. Hale. Fine to include it as a rare story (though it had been reprinted in book form) but why not credit the right author? As last time, another Stephen King story, "The Night of the Tiger," was declared as "unknown." The story had been published just ten months earlier in the February 1978 *F & SF*. This time Haining did beat the Year's-Best brigade in getting it into book form first.

On the whole, the *Unknown Tales of Horror* series is disappointing. The number of genuine discoveries is small, and the



quality of most of the stories is poor. I know how difficult it is to try and assemble volumes which combine rarity, quality and well-known names. Those wells are mostly dry. To add the requirement that they hadn't previously been in book form is only a further hurdle, because the consequence is to select from new magazines. I'd rather take Hugh Lamb's approach of rare stories from no matter what source. His hit rate is generally better than Haining's. And yet, despite this, Haining informs me that these three are amongst the most highly sought-after of his books, with Haining having been offered \$300 for the first volume.

Haining returned to this well a few years later with a more satisfying volume—the wholly inappropriately titled *Tales of Dungeons and Dragons* (the title was the publisher's, not Haining's). Haining is more cautious in his claim this time, in that he is presenting stories omitted from authors' collected works. The

fact that some of these writers hadn't had any "collected works" is neither here nor there. Haining's basically saying these stories are hitherto uncollected, not necessarily unanthologised. It's a much easier claim to live up to and, with a certain editorial license, the hit rate is much higher. The dedicated collector will know that some of these stories had been reprinted recently, either in special editions, small press magazines or specialist publications, but to the majority of the reading public they were not readily available. So I give Haining the benefit of the doubt in his reprintings of "The Dualists" by Bram Stoker, Edgar Allan Poe's "The Lighthouse" (completed by Bloch), John Collier's "The Monster of the Deep," M.R. James's "The Malice of Inanimate Objects," Sheridan Le Fanu's "Borhomeo the Astrologer," William Hope Hodgson's "The Haunted Pampero," Algernon Blackwood's "The Magic Mirror," Olaf Stapledon's "A Modern Magician," Lord Dunsany's "The Field Where the Satyrs Danced." I look a little furrowed at the inclusion of "The Mangler" by Stephen King, "Shining Hat at Tarring Neville" by T.H. White, "The Glove" by Fritz Leiber, "The Hollow Land" by William Morris, "The Bat King" by James Hilton, Lovecraft's section of "The Challenge from Beyond" (which Haining had already used), "People of the Black Coast" by Robert E. Howard and Ray Bradbury's "Bright Phoenix." And finally I applaud Haining's discovery of Sax Rohmer's "The Mysterious Mummy," Arthur Ransome's "The Ageing Faun," and Heath Robinson's "Biddulph." It's unlikely that everyone will have encountered most of these stories before, and it's a generally more acceptable volume.

It may seem strange, but Haining has assembled very few ghost anthologies. He seems to go in more for monsters and other corporeal horrors than genuine spookiness. A few ghost volumes that he did for younger readers, *The Ghost's Companion* and *The Ghost Finders*, contain good but relatively well known stories. Likewise, *Supernatural Sleuths*, a volume of psychic detective stories, tended to use many of the old favourites, or some spurious items from old pulps.²

He's much better when he tries to track phantoms on the move. Take *The Ghost Ship*. This is a very well researched and fascinating volume of stories about *The Flying Dutchman* or similarly cursed ships. Most of the stories are rare, but of good

quality, and the few well known stories that creep in are nevertheless appropriate and welcome. It's one of Haining's better anthologies.

When this appeared he had already moved into the territory of peripatetic ghosts, disguised under his William Patrick pseudonym. This series had started with *Mysterious Railway Stories*, a title broad enough to allow for supernatural and non-supernatural stories. It's a fine collection. Leaving aside the better known stories, there's some good rarities in "My Adventure in the Flying Scotsman" by Eden Philpotts, "The Cloud-Bursters" by Francis Lynde, "The Level Crossing" by Freeman Wills Crofts and "Swamp Train" by Harry Walton. It's in this volume, though, where Haining makes what I believe is his biggest blunder. He reprints "The Fisherman's Special," a perfectly acceptable story from the August, 1939 *Weird Tales*. He credits the story to Hal Thomson, whose dates he gives as 1898-1944, and who he says, was "the magazine's writer who specialised in stories with a railroad background" and "had a long connection with trains in the Northern States." What!? For a start the name was H. L. Thomson, not Hal, and she was a girl: the L. stood for Lila. She only had one story in *Weird Tales*, and she was just seventeen at the time, so she hardly had a long connection with trains and she certainly didn't specialise in railroad stories. Since most of this is easy to check I have no idea why Haining said what he did, because he must know readers with any background in weird fiction would know. Back in 1980, when Robert Weinberg was producing *The Weird Tales Collector*, he received a letter from Lila Thomson, still alive and kicking (and not dead since 1944) and living in Florida. The letter appears in *The Weird Tales Collector* and gives all the background you need about her and her story.³

After this came *Mysterious Sea Stories*, which also has a good blend of new and old, rare and moderately well-known, but as a theme well-plumbed by other anthologists, it was hard to get a quality volume without repeating well-used stories. Better was *Mysterious Air Stories*, a surprisingly untouched area which allowed Haining much more choice. Apart from the obvious "Horror of the Heights" by Conan Doyle, and "The Argonauts of the Air" by H.G. Wells, and perhaps the less obvious but well known "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet" by Richard Matheson, all of the other stories are fairly obscure or once known but now hard to get (like Verne's "A Drama in the Air"). The quality is variable, but the sheer rarity of the theme makes them interesting. Here's one area that would benefit from more research to unearth other weird stories of the air. (It's a little surprising that Haining selected no stories from Gernsback's *Air Wonder Stories*, for amongst the crap there were one or two good stories worth resurrecting.)

The final volume in the series was *Mysterious Motoring Stories* (reprinted as *Duel*). Here there is a wide choice, as stories of bizarre cars and roads abound. Haining manages to get a good selection, again combining rarity with quality. There are one or two duds, but generally they are worth reading.

Haining returned once more to the travel theme, this



time under the Richard Peyton alias, with *The Ghost Now Standing on Platform One* (also called *Journey Into Fear*). This proved a very popular anthology, perhaps because so many people enjoy railway stories. It blends a mixture of very well known stories (Dickens's "The Signal-Man," Peter Fleming's "The Kill"), with a few you feel you know better than you do (Kipling's "007," Alfred Noyes's "Midnight Express"), with a few that ought to be better known (Aickman's "The Waiting Room," Burrage's "The Wrong Station," Rolt's "The Garside Fell Disaster," Richard Hughes's "Locomotive") and a few that are much harder to find ("The Town Where No One Got Off" Ray Bradbury, "The Astral Lady" Eden Philpotts and "Lost in the Fog" by J.D. Beresford). The rest are competent fillers.

In recent years, Haining's themes have become much more restrictive,

making his chance to select stories harder and a greater likelihood of repetition. Yet his horse racing mysteries, *Deadly Odds* (perhaps better known now as *Great Racing Stories*), was a very popular volume. His collection about crime and food, *Murder on the Menu*, has also been well received, allowing the opportunity for a sequel, *Murder By the Glass*. Unfortunately, his volume of strange and mysterious chess stories, *Sinister Gambits*, which I think is the best of them, fared less well, so that a planned sequel involving card games, has been shelved.

Also, for younger readers, he has produced a series moving through the various archetypal monsters of horror. This series began with *Vampire*. Aimed at younger and therefore newer readers, Haining is able to reprint better known stories, and I fear another retread of "Dracula's Guest" was inevitable, though Richard Matheson's "No Such Thing as a Vampire" and F. Marion Crawford's "For the Blood is the Life" are more welcome. The other stories, though, are more varied. There's another extract from *Varney the Vampyre*, thankfully properly credited to Rymer, and there are worthy stories by John Flanders, Curt Siodmak, Frank Owen and Phil Robinson which I've not seen anthologized before, as well as slightly better known stories by Edith Wharton, Robert Bloch, Robert E. Howard and Ray Bradbury, though unlikely to be known to most readers.

Zombie!, which followed, is a strangely uneven volume. I'm not a great fan of zombie stories anyway, though Stephen Jones's *Mammoth Book of Zombies* is an excellent collection. But here Haining seemed to be scraping the barrel, when in fact there were plenty of other barrels to choose from. The book starts with W.B. Seabrook's well known "Dead Men Working in the Cane Fields." Also included are "Jumbee" by Henry S. Whitehead, "The Hollow Man" by Thomas Burke, and "The House in the Magnolias" by August Derleth. The rarest selections are "The Country of the Corners-Back" by Lafcadio Hearn, "White Zombie" by Vivian Meik and two stories from *Ghost Stories* by G.W. Hutter and Gordon Leigh Bromley. Haining makes some extravagant claims about these writers and their stories which may well be true, but I reserve judgement.

Next came *Werewolf*. As we have seen, Haining's anthologies have contained several werewolf stories, but this is his only complete werewolf anthology. It's a fairly weak volume. The high spot, from the viewpoint of rarity, are "The Werewolves" by Henry (more properly Honoré) Beaugrand, but from quality's point of view it's good to see "The Wolves of God" by Blackwood, "The Master of the House" by Oliver Onions, "The Wolf Girl" by Guy Endore and "The Refugee" by Jane Rice. The rest are fairly average stories, which may be suitable as introductions for new and young readers, but soon pall on the more experienced.

This is less true of *Poltergeist*, which is the best of the series. There is the umpteenth retread of Lytton's "The Haunted and the Haunters," though it's a good story nonetheless, but the rest, aside from "The Haunted Bungalow" by Charles Duff and "Minuke" by Nigel Kneale, are not that well known, and are enjoyable stories. Particularly welcome are "Thursday Evenings" by E.F. Benson, "The Death Room" by Edgar Wallace, "Maggie's Bite" by Laurence Housman and "Parasite Mansion" by Mary E. Counselman.

The Mummy is the latest volume in the series. I'm not a great fan of mummy stories—you can only do so many plot twists—and most of them are here. If you want to re-read "Lot No. 249" by Doyle, "The Story of Baelbrow" by E. & H. Heron, "The Mummy's Foot" by Gautier, "Imprisoned With the Pharaohs" by Lovecraft and "Monkeys" by E.F. Benson, well, here they are again. There are a few other interesting items, like "Black Coffee" by Jeffrey Farnol, and surprisingly "The Flying Head" by A. Hyatt Verrill, but overall it's an average volume.

Movie Monsters is technically part of this series, but this brings us back to a theme that runs through many of Haining's books and that is the association of the horror story with the cinema and other media, particularly television and radio, and it gives us a final thread to unravel and tie together any loose ends. In doing so I'll still not have covered more than about 70% of Haining's anthologies!

As mentioned earlier, there is a touch of this in Haining's early volume, *Dr. Caligari's Black Book*, which is presented "in thirteen acts" giving a feeling of theatrics. But it first bloomed in *The Hollywood Nightmare*, a volume which, you may like to note, exists in three variant forms. The anthology was inspired by Haining's recognition that many writers who had grown up in the fantasy/horror magazine field had turned their talents to writing scripts for tv and films. The book is ostensibly a volume of stories by screenwriters, though in fact this is stretching the truth somewhat as Haining has also included stories about the film industry, or by writers with some other links with films. Nevertheless this double connection makes it quite an intriguing volume without too much repetition. The quality of the writers is never in doubt, although some of the early stories, like Bloch's "Return to the Sabbath," creak a little. The best are "The Shadow on the Screen" by Henry Kuttner, "Death Double" by William F. Nolan, "The Casket-Demon" by Fritz Leiber, "Mantage" by Richard Matheson, "Gavin O'Leary" by John Collier and "The New People" by Charles Beaumont (not in the later edition). There's a good second-string of

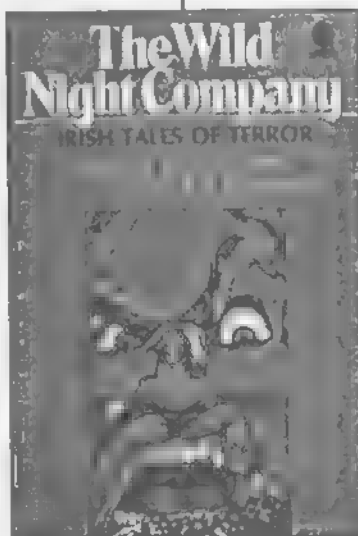
stories by Bradbury, Derleth, Chad Oliver and Ballard, plus an introduction by Christopher Lee.

From here Haining moved on to stories that inspired films in *The Ghouls* (I've never understood the connection of that title to the book). He also used the opportunity to trace the development of the horror film medium. That makes it a rather ambitious project, and in truth I feel it only succeeds half way. That's mostly because the choice of films is rather second-rate leading to some rather odd stories. Who, after all, would immediately think of Poe's "The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether" which inspired the 1912 film *The Lunatics*, or Hawthorne's "Feathertop," which was the source of the 1923 film *Puritan Passions*. At the other extreme we get the all-too obvious, such as *Freaks*, based on Tod Robbins's "Spurs" (already used once by Haining), *The Most Dangerous Game* based on Richard Connell's story of the same name (though I know the film better as *The Hounds of Zaroff*), *The Phantom of the Opera* based on Gaston Leroux's story, and *Dracula's Daughter*, based apparently on Stoker's "Dracula's Guest" (was it?). And so it goes. The only good selections, to my mind, are "The Beast With Five Fingers" by Harvey, "The Fly" by George Langelaan, "The Colour Out of Space" by Lovecraft, and "The Skull" by Bloch, all well known stories.

The volume is similar in concept to the later *Movie Monsters* (which includes several of the same stories) and only a couple of items of interest: Wells's own abridgement of "The War of the Worlds" and Gaston Leroux's rare story "Balao—the Demon Baboon."

The next volume linked to the films is *Christopher Lee's New Chamber of Horrors* which, according to Lee's introduction, contains some of his favorite tales which "indirectly trace my film career." They must be very indirect because I find it difficult to find any connection at all, though Lee seeks to do so in his story introductions. (The most bizarre is the link to Dunsany's "The Magician," because Lee was born near where the story is set!) I have to confess I've never been a fan of volumes produced apparently by some film star to cash in on his reputation, because they always read false. Lee I know is more genuine than most in his fondness for weird fiction, and I am sure some of these are his favorite stories, but that's because most of them are well known and not ones we want to read for a further time. The only one I hadn't read before was "The Whispering Mummy" by Sax Rohmer, but that was only because I don't like Rohmer's work.

By the early 1980s, Haining was well into producing tv/film associated books, particularly the Doctor Who and Sherlock Holmes compendia. In his anthologies he now produced two of which I am particularly fond: *Greasepaint and Ghosts* and *Tune in for Fear*. These strike me as more personal, more sincere volumes, shed of the hype of his film-promoting books. Unfortunately my copy of *Greasepaint and Ghosts* vanished some while ago and I cannot now refer to it. But I remember enjoying it very much on first reading. It's a volume of stories associated with the theatre, and the only two I feel need not have been included are an excerpt from *The Phantom of the Opera* (relevant though it may be), and Tennessee Williams's "The Vengeance of Nitocris" (irrelevant as it is). But the rest, including items by Abraham



Lincoln, Sarah Bernhardt and Charlie Chaplin, are a fascinating selection and make me wish I had my copy back.

Tune in for Fear is perhaps Haining's most personal volume, and his tribute to radio. Like Haining, I grew up captivated by the power of radio, and thrilled to many plays. I doubt if Haining actually heard half of the stories he presents here, since many were adapted for American radio and some, like A.J. Alan's "The Diver" were broadcast before Haining was born. But that's not the point; Haining is presenting here stories used in the golden age of radio, and as such he attracts the nostalgia buff in the same way his railway volumes attract the fans of steam trains. A few of these stories are probably overly familiar, such as Blackwood's "A Haunted Island," Meyrink's "The Golem," Mrs Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story," and Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," but others are far harder to find, including "Mr Mergenthwirker's Lobbies" by Nelson Bond, "Mrs Hawker's Will" by Alonzo Deen Cole, and "Incubus" by Marjorie Bowen. It would have been nice if Haining had interested an audio-tape publisher in this volume, because I suspect these stories would be even more appreciated if read aloud.

And this brings us, at last, to *The Television Late Night Horror Omnibus*, which does for tv what *Tune in for Fear* did for radio. It's a companion volume to *The Television Detectives' Omnibus* (also called *The Armchair Detective*). In the horror volume, Haining does a remarkable job in relating facts and figures about 33 British and American tv series from the last forty years and in presenting representative stories. At nearly six hundred pages, this book is more a present for a young relative fascinated in tv horror than for a devotee of fiction, because a fair number of the stories are well known, ("The Monkey's Paw," believe it or not, "The Hollow Man" by Burke again, and "The Crystal Egg" by H.G. Wells), but others are far from well known. I know I would've made a different selection from some of these series, and certainly wouldn't have used "The Machine Stops" from *Out of this World*, when there was the far more effective "Impostor" by Philip K. Dick, for example. But "Where Is Everybody?" by Rod Serling is a good representative for *The Twilight Zone* and "Pickman's Model" by Lovecraft is very appropriate for *Night Gallery*.

But there we must leave it. As you'll see from the accompanying checklist, I've covered a fair proportion of Haining's volumes but by no means all. In rediscovering these volumes I've confirmed my views that whilst Haining does go a long way to find rare and lesser known material, he has a most infuriating habit of recycling well known ones over and over again, sometimes changing their titles to protect the innocent! He occasionally presents dubious facts which do not stand up to testing, and this consequently casts into doubt other rare facts that are probably true. Nevertheless, in his 100 or more anthologies and collections he will have presented to readers a greater proportion of obscure stories than any other anthologist, and certainly in the '60s and early '70s did the greatest single-handed job of reviving interest in the horror short sto-



ry, and re-establishing a credibility for the horror anthology.

Apart from occasional lapses his anthologies are always readable and enjoyable, and more recently, because they are less prodigious, they also seem to be more carefully assembled. I shall not list here my short-list of Haining's essential library, but these are marked by asterisks in the following checklist. Although I don't think he has achieved as much in rediscovering forgotten writers as Hugh Lamb or Richard Dalby, he has probably contributed more to sustaining and developing the public's interest in weird fiction than any anthologist since Derieth and, at the end of the day, that's what it's all about.

My thanks to Peter Haining for background data on his books and for commenting on the draft of this article (and for not attempting to alter my views)! He also kindly let me have a copy of Greasepaint and Ghosts and it was a delight to have that volume back on my shelves.

Endnotes

1. This title always makes me chuckle and reminds me of the Marty Feldman and John Cleese bookshop sketch where Marty is looking for David Copperfield (with one 'p') by Charles Dickens (with two k's). When that and others aren't available he settles for *Ethel the Aardvark Goes Quantity Surveying*.

2. I say spurious because I've long been puzzled by Haining's notes on "Panic in Wild Harbor" by Gordon Malherbe Hillman. I did considerable research when helping Frank Parnell with *Monthly Terrors*, our index to weird-fantasy magazines, and I could find no biographical data about Hillman, although Haining gives him the dates 1909-1960. "Panic in Wild Harbor", though, comes from the September, 1929 *Ghost Stories*, which would have made Hillman 20 when he wrote the story—not impossible, but less likely as Haining says "it has been suggested that Hillman may at one time have been a seaman as a number of his stories deal with maritime subjects." Well, that wouldn't have allowed much time for him to be a seaman and then write stories, though Haining changes the story's date to 1939 (long after *Ghost Stories* had followed), which does seem to give more scope. I have been suspicious of some of the dates Haining attributes to obscure writers because no one else can find any equivalent source. In *The Barbarian Swordsmen*, Haining dates Clifford Ball as living from 1896-1947, which is credible (and I took it on trust in *Monthly Terrors*) but which several of my correspondents have since challenged and suggested, from other sources, could not be right.

3. When I raised this issue with Haining he admitted he had made a few mistakes, "but only on the basis of information supplied by agents or others who I felt might know. I've certainly made a few glaring errors, but in 30 years I think my record isn't bad..."

A CHECKLIST OF PETER HAINING ANTHOLOGIES, SINGLE-AUTHOR COLLECTIONS, & OTHER ASSOCIATIONAL VOLUMES

The following lists all of Haining's anthologies and volumes containing either supernatural, horror, mystery or science fiction, plus his non-fiction books of associational interest. I have listed them in alphabetical order for ease of reference. The asterisks (*) are my nominations for the essential Haining library.

Supernatural, Horror and Mystery Anthologies

1. *The Ancient Mysteries Reader*. New York: Doubleday, 1975 (hc); London: Victor Gollancz, 1975 (hc); London: Sphere Books, 1978 (pb, in 2 vols).
2. *Anyone For Murder?* (ghost-edited as by Alfred Hitchcock). London: Four Square Books, 1967 (pb).
The Armchair Detectives, see *The Television Detectives' Omnibus*.
At the Track, see *Deadly Odds*.
3. *The Barbarian Swordsmen*, as by Sean Richards. London: Star Books, 1981 (pb).
4. *Behind the Locked Door and Other Strange Tales* (ghost-edited as by Alfred Hitchcock). London: Four Square Books, 1967 (pb).
- 5.* *Beyond the Curtain of Dark*. London: Four Square Books, 1966 (pb); London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972 (hc); New York: Pinnacle, 1972 (pb).
6. *The Black Magic Omnibus*. London: Robson Books, 1976 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1976 (hc); split into 2 volumes as *Black Magic 1* and *Black Magic 2*, both London: Orbit Books, 1977 (pb).
- 7.* *Christmas Spirits* London: William Kimber, 1983 (hc).
8. *Christopher Lee's New Chamber of Horrors*. London: Souvenir Press, 1974 (hc); split in 2 volumes as *Christopher Lee's New Chamber of Horrors* London: Mayflower Books, 1976 (pb), and *More of Christopher Lee's New Chamber of Horrors*, London: Mayflower Books, 1976 (pb).
- 9.* *A Circle of Witches*. London: Robert Hale, 1971 (hc); New York, Taplinger, 1971 (hc).
- 10.* *The Clans of Darkness*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1971 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1971 (hc); London: Sphere Books, 1972 (pb); retitled *Scottish Stories of Fantasy and Horror*, New York: Crown, 1988 (hc).
11. *Classic Horror Omnibus*. London: New English Library, 1979 (hc); New York: Book Sales, 1979 (hc).
12. *Classic Mystery Omnibus*. London: New English Library, 1980 (hc).
13. *The Craft of Terror*. London: Four Square Books, 1966 (pb); London: Mews Books, 1976 (pb).
14. *Dead of Night*. London: William Kimber, 1981 (hc); New York: Stein & Day, 1983 (hc) and 1986 (pb); New York: Dorset Press, 1989 (hc).
Deadlier Odds, see *Deadly Odds*.
15. *Deadly Nightshade*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1977 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1978 (hc); London: Beaver Books, 1977 (pb).
16. *Deadly Odds*, as by Richard Peyton. London: Souvenir Press, 1986 (hc); retitled *At the Track*, New York: Bonanza Books, 1988 (hc); split as 2 volumes as *Deadly Odds* and *Deadlier Odds* both, Bath: Lythway Press, 1988; reissued as one volume and retitled *Great Racing Stories*, London: Chancellor Press, 1993 (hc).
Detours into the Macabre, see *The Lucifer Society*.
17. *Dr. Caligari's Black Book*. London: W.H. Allen, 1968 (hc); revised contents, London: New English Library, 1969 (pb).
Duel, and Other Horror Stories of the Road, as by William Patrick, see *Mysterious Motoring Stories*.
- 18.* *The Edgar Allan Poe Bedside Companion*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1980 (hc).
19. *The Elephant Man and Other Freaks*, as by Sean Richards. London: Macdonald Futura, 1980 (pb).
Everyman's Book of Classic Horror Stories, see *The Hell of Mirrors*, revised edition.
20. *The Evil People*. London: Leslie Frewin, 1968 (hc); New York:

- Popular Library, 1969 (pb); London: Ensign Books, 1974 (pb).
21. *The Fantastic Pulp*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1975 (hc); New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975 (hc); New York: Vintage Books, 1976 (pb).
The First Book of Unknown Tales of Horror, see *Unknown Tales of Horror*.
22. *The Frankenstein File*. London: New English Library, 1977 (tp).
23. *The Frankenstein Omnibus*. London: Orion, 1994 (hc).
24. *The Freak Show*. London: Rapp & Whiting, 1970 (hc); London: Corgi Books, 1971 (pb); New York: Nelson, 1972 (hc).
25. *The Future Makers*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1968 (hc); London: New English Library, 1969 (pb); New York: Belmont Books, 1971 (pb); London: Robert Hale, 1975 (hc); London: Magnum Books, 1979 (pb).
- 26.* *The Gentlewomen of Evil*. London: Robert Hale, 1967 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1967 (hc).
27. *The Ghost Finders*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1978 (hc).
- 28.* *The Ghost Now Standing on Platform One*, as by Richard Peyton. London: Souvenir Press, 1990 (hc); retitled *Journey Into Fear*, New York: Wings Press, 1991 (hc); under original title, London: Futura, 1991 (pb); retitled *Journey Into Fear*, London: Chancellor Press, 1993 (hc).
- 29.* *The Ghost Ship* London: William Kimber, 1985 (hc).
30. *Ghost Tour* London: William Kimber, 1984 (hc).
31. *The Ghost's Companion*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1975 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1976 (hc); slightly revised, London: Puffin Books, 1978 (pb).
32. *The Ghouls*. London: W.H. Allen, 1971 (hc); New York: Stein & Day, 1971 (hc); New York: Pocket Books, 1972 (pb); London: Orbit Books, 1974 (pb, in 2 vols.)
- 33.* *Gothic Tales of Terror*. New York: Taplinger, 1972 (hc); split into two volumes as *Great British Tales of Terror*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1972 (hc); London and Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1973 (pb); and *Great Tales of Terror from Europe and America*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1972 (hc); London and Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1973 (pb).
34. *The Graveyard Man* (ghost-edited as by Alfred Hitchcock). London: Four Square Books, 1968 (pb).
- 35.* *Greasepaint and Ghosts*. London: William Kimber, 1982 (hc).
Great British Tales of Terror, see *Gothic Tales of Terror (Volume 1)*.
36. *Great Irish Detective Stories*. London: Souvenir Press, 1993 (hc).
- 37.* *Great Irish Stories of the Supernatural*. London: Souvenir Press, 1992 (hc); London: Pan Books, 1993.
Great Racing Stories, see *Deadly Odds*.
Great Tales of Crime and Detection, see *The Television Detectives' Omnibus*.
Great Tales of Terror from Europe and America, see *Gothic Tales of Terror (Volume 2)*.
38. *Great Irish Tales of the Unimaginable*. London: Souvenir Press, 1994 (hc).
39. *Guaranteed Rest in Peace* (ghost-edited as by Alfred Hitchcock). London: Four Square Books, 1967 (pb).
40. *Hallowe'en Hauntings*. London: William Kimber, 1984 (hc).
41. *The Hashish Club: Volume 1, Founding the Modern Tradition*. London: Peter Owen, 1975 (hc).
42. *The Hashish Club: Volume 2, The Psychedelic Era*. London: Peter Owen, 1975 (hc).
43. *The Hell of Mirrors*. London: Four Square Books, 1965 (pb); contents substantially revised, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1974 (hc); retitled *Everyman's Book of Classic Horror Stories*, London: J.M. Dent, 1976 (pb).
- 44.* *The Hollywood Nightmare*. London: Macdonald, 1970 (hc); contents revised, New York: Taplinger, 1971 (hc); contents further revised, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1973 (pb).
Irish Tales of Terror, see *The Wild Night Company*.
Journey Into Fear, see *The Ghost Now Standing on Platform One*.
45. *The Late Unlamented* (ghost-edited as by Alfred Hitchcock). London: Four Square Books, 1967 (pb).
46. *Legends for the Dark*. London: Four Square Books, 1968 (pb); see also revision with *Summoned From the Tomb*.
47. *The Lucifer Society*. London: W.H. Allen, 1972 (hc); New York:

- Taplinger, 1972 (hc); New York: Signet Books, 1973 (pb); retitled *Detours Into the Macabre*, London: Pan Books, 1974 (pb); retitled *Masters of the Macabre*, London: Robert Hale, 1993 (hc).
- 48.* *M. R. James, Book of the Supernatural*. London: Foulsham, 1979 (hc); retitled *M. R. James: The Book of Ghost Stories*, New York: Stein & Day, 1982 (hc).
M. R. James: The Book of Ghost Stories, see *M. R. James, Book of the Supernatural*.
- 49.* *The Magic Valley Travellers*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1974 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1974 (hc).
- 50.* *The Magicians*. London: Peter Owen, 1972 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1973 (hc); London: Pan Books, 1975 (pb).
Masters of the Macabre, see *The Lucifer Society*.
51. *Meet Death at Night* (ghost-edited as by Alfred Hitchcock). London: Four Square Books, 1967 (pb).
- 52.* *The Midnight People*. London: Leslie Frewin, 1968 (hc); London: Ensign Books, 1974; retitled *Vampires at Midnight*, New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1970 (hc); New York: Popular Library, 1970 (pb); London: Warner Books, 1993 (pb).
53. *The Monster Makers*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1974 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1974 (hc); contents abridged and revised, London: Knight Books, 1980 (pb).
More of Christopher Lee's New Chamber of Horrors, abridged from *Christopher Lee's New Chamber of Horrors*.
54. *More Tales of Unknown Horror*. London: New English Library, 1979 (pb); revised and retitled *The Third Book of Unknown Tales of Horror*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1980 (hc).
55. *Movie Monsters: Great Horror Film Stories*. London: Severn House, 1988 (hc).
56. *The Mummy: Stories of the Living Corpse*. London: Severn House, 1988 (hc).
57. *Murder By the Glass*. London: Souvenir Press, forthcoming (hc). [Should be Autumn 1994.]
- 58.* *Murder on the Menu*. London: Souvenir Press, 1991 (hc); New York: Carroll & Graf, 1992 (hc); split as 2 volumes, London: Pocket Books, 1993 (pb).
- 59.* *Mysterious Air Stories*, as by William Patrick. London: W.H. Allen, 1986 (hc).
- 60.* *Mysterious Motoring Stories*, as by William Patrick. London: W.H. Allen, 1987 (hc); retitled *Duel, and Other Horror Stories of the Road*, London: Star Books, 1987 (pb).
- 61.* *Mysterious Railway Stories*, as by William Patrick. London: W.H. Allen, 1984 (hc); London: Star Books, 1984 (pb).
- 62.* *Mysterious Sea Stories*, as by William Patrick. London: W.H. Allen, 1985 (hc); New York: Salem House, 1985 (hc); London: Star Books, 1986 (pb).
63. *The Necromancers*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1971 (hc); New York: William Morrow, 1972 (hc); London: Coronet Books, 1972 (pb).
64. *Nightcaps and Nightmares*. London: William Kimber, 1983 (hc).
65. *Nightfrights*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1972 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1973 (hc); London: Peacock Books, 1975 (pb).
- 66.* *The Nightmare Reader*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1973 (hc); New York: Doubleday, 1973 (hc); London: Pan Books, 1976 (pb in two volumes).
- 67.* *The Penny Dreadful*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1975 (hc).
- 68.* *Poltergeist: Tales Of Deadly Ghosts*. London: Severn House, 1987 (hc).
69. *The Satanists*. Neville Spearman, 1969 (hc); New York: Taplinger, 1969 (hc); London: Mayflower Books, 1971 (pb); New York: Pyramid Books, 1972 (pb).
Scottish Stories of Fantasy and Horror, see *The Clans of Darkness*.
70. *The Second Book of Unknown Tales of Horror*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1978 (hc); retitled *Tales of Unknown Horror*, London: New English Library, 1978 (pb).
- 71.* *Shilling Shockers*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1978 (hc); New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978 (hc).
- 72.* *Sinister Gambits*, as by Richard Peyton. London: Souvenir Press, 1991 (hc); Canada: Quarry Press, 1993 (hc).
Stories of the Walking Dead, see *Zombie!*.
73. *Summoned From the Tomb*. London: Digit Books, 1966 (pb); contents revised and partly merged with *Legends for the Dark*, as *Summoned From the Tomb*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1973 (hc).
74. *Supernatural Sleuths*. London: William Kimber, 1986 (hc).
75. *Tales From the Rogues Gallery*. London: Little, Brown, forthcoming (hc). [Should be Autumn 1994.]
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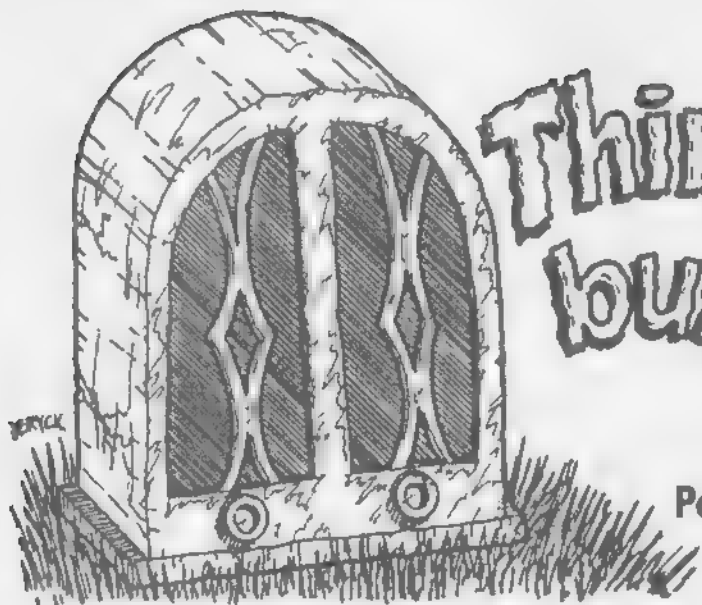
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Things that go bump on the air

Part Three Of An Informal Six-Part Look At The Radio Horror Genre

by Shawn Danowski

Editor's notes: In part two of this six-part series—which appeared in TSF #14, Shawn Danowski examined the beginnings of radio horror, focusing on Lights Out!, The Hermit's Cave, and Dark Fantasy.

The following graphics are courtesy of Kurt Kuersteiner and Mystery Playhouse Productions.

With the arrival of *Inner Sanctum* on January 7, 1941, the second phase of radio horror began, and a new kind of horror ushered in a busy decade for this genre in the audio medium. Like *Lights Out!*, *Inner Sanctum* enjoys a reputation beyond the limited bounds of old radio fandom. Unlike *Lights Out!* however, *Inner Sanctum*—the 1941-1952 series sometimes referred to as the “program of the creaking door”—is today considered to be the series that epitomizes both old radio horror and the decade that some would dub the “Golden Age” of audio horror, the 1940s. Many critics find serious fault with the series receiving this adulation, considering it to be undeserved. They would prefer that we extol the virtues of *Lights Out!* They are not entirely wrong: for sheer horror, and for sheer creativity, *Lights Out!* is foremost. But *Inner Sanctum* had many positives in its favor, and those positives not only made it the longest running of any radio horror series, but also continue to lure new fans to the series each generation.

To state matters simply, *Inner Sanctum* had three things working for it, the first of which was the opening segment. Radio historians have made the valid point that most truly memorable radio programs had distinctive openings. Seldom is that more true than with *Inner Sanctum*. Included in the opening segment was Raymond, the Sanctum's keeper, easily radio's most famous host. The stories which followed are the second reason for the show's endurance. It can accurately be said that *Inner Sanctum* brought a new kind of horror to the airwaves, one which had been experimented with before, but which, with *Inner Sanctum*, became the preference of an entire series. *Inner Sanctum* is the domain of the pseu-

do-supernatural, the wildly improbable (even illogical) suspense stories, and the type of stories Arch Oboler once dubbed “psych-horror,” but which we will call psychological horror.

History has proven, however, that sterling attributes such as innovation do not always guarantee success. There was something else about *Inner Sanctum* that made the show click despite its shortcomings. Strange as it may sound to say this about a horror program, *Inner Sanctum's* greatest asset was the fact that it did not take itself too seriously. Put another way, you might say that it was a horror program with an attitude. Many imitators copied *Inner Sanctum's* stories and its preference for fake supernaturalism. But those imitations failed to capture *Inner Sanctum's* spirit—the attitude—and thus often leave the listener feeling as if they have just wasted a half hour of their lives. This attitude is not without its critics, and said critics will frequently cite the series' reliance on too many phony horrors that got the listeners' hopes all worked up, only to dash them at the climax. The reason *Inner Sanctum* got away with all its buffoonery is because the listener gets the sense that *Inner Sanctum* is winking at them, saying, in effect, “You don't really believe this, and neither do we, so what say we not take ourselves too seriously here?” The show's creator/director/producer, Himan Brown, one of the all-time greats of audio drama, knew how to make *Inner Sanctum's* brand of horror work, and he knew how to do it so that the listener rarely got tired of all those phony dead men running around. This is the attitude, the style, of *Inner Sanctum*, and coupled with the other two factors, it elevates even the most mundane episode into something worth listening to, if only to hear Raymond's twisted humor. The attitude goes beyond the stories themselves, permeating even the behind-the-scenes work. Brown and his staff were not content to limit themselves to twist endings and various horror trappings to catch the listener off guard. Legend has it that Brown would deliberately and shamelessly use the same twist ending two weeks in a row, knowing full

well that the listeners thought that he would not dare pull the same stunt twice.

Some have termed this the "horror is hilarious" approach; conversely, some critics have called it "cheating." Certainly *Inner Sanctum* found more humor in grisly deeds and supernatural going-ons than did any other series. And, significantly, the show realized what it was doing and even made light of it, as proven by Raymond's concluding remarks in "House of Doom," a 1948 episode in which every character suffers death by the same means: falling through a trap door.

"Well, friends, if you think that Richard and Kathy aren't going to go down that trap door, then you just don't have enough imagination. Or you haven't heard any *Inner Sanctums*."

But more than anything else, the spirit of *Inner Sanctum* was (and is) embodied in its host, Raymond, who began each show by opening the famous creaking door, and in so doing gave radio its single best remembered sound of the era. In fact, the creaking door became so identified with *Inner Sanctum* that it is today one of two audio sounds in the world to be legally trademarked. Today a horror cliché, the creaking door might have been radio's perfect opening, a sound effect which fit perfectly with the subject matter it heralded. The creaking door, backed by deep, somber, throbbing organ music, set the stage for the entrance of Raymond, who invited us into his sanctum where the jokes, plays-on-words, corny puns, and introductions to various members of the sanctum came fast and furiously:

"Say, let me tell you about the new soap opera I heard the other morning. It's a slippery little stanza entitled *John's Other Coffin*. This program poses the question, can the murderous husband be happy with the spirit of his dead wife? It seems everything went fine with his marriage until one night at dinner his wife asked him to pass the knife. Which he did—right through her!

"Then he hid her body in the town bell. And *that's* where he made a big mistake. Because the next morning, she 'toll'd' on him."
("Only The Dead Die Twice")

"We had a surprise visitation here a scream or two ago: a sight-seeing delegation simply crazy to take it all in. One on-looker's mouth was so agape, you'd think it was split from ear-to-ear. Confidentially, chums, it was. The head of the delegation was terribly proud of his honorary title. Poor chap. It was the only head he had. Ah, yes. Things went along cozily until some wag suggested holding hands. We brought out a trunk full of hands we keep for just such occasions."

("Between Two Worlds")

"Tonight's story should teach you to never tell a lie. Lying leads to cheating; cheating leads to murder; and murder leads to insanity. All of which are very bad habits to get into, indeed."

("The Dead Walk At Night")

"Well, there goes Carol. Fundamentally a nice girl with a slight character defect: she killed people."

("Death Rides The Riptide")

"Did you ever have the screaming-meemies? Did you ever get an attack of the yelling and wailing jitters. Do you walk in your sleep? Do you ever wake in the middle of the night, shrieking at the top of your lungs? Oh, you do?"

"Well, you must be an awfully hard person to live with."

("Death Is A Joker")

"Huh? Kind of dead, you say? Well, yes, but we have our grisly little amusements. For example, our museum has the only authentic copy of 'The Moaning Lisa.' In music, we are very fond of Mendel Groan's 'Overture To A Midsummer's Night Scream.' As for the movies, what really rattled our bones was *The Razor's Edge*."

("Corpse In The Cab")

"All's well that ends dreary. Yes, as we say here in the *Inner Sanctum*: the end always justifies the scream."

("The Deadly Dummy")

"Well, been shopping around for a nice case of murder? Of corpse you have! And you've come to the right place because the characters on this program simply kill themselves to keep you amused."

"Why, only the other day we were accuse of making murder our business. But we wouldn't do that, friends. Oh, no, because that would be mixing business with pleasure. And we consider it a pleasure to give some stiff the business."

("Ghosts Always Last Laugh")

"Say hello to one of our hapless heroines. Her spouse said he was going to the club one evening, but he brought it back and clouted her with it...."

("Jane Carter")



Clearly this was not Ol' Nancy [the host of *The Witch's Tale*; see TSF #12 for details]. Raymond was not only the most polished of all the era's horror program hosts, he was a different kind of host in many ways. Previous hosts displayed no true sense of humor save for the occasional ironic, flippant remark at story's end. Raymond makes it his forté. Earlier hosts cackled quite a bit, but not because they were funny or because they had made a witty observation. They were just demented old people who were there for no other reason than to introduce the story, and some director thought that an irritating laugh harsh on the ears made them

more frightening. Raymond's ghoulish laughter is for a purpose: it heightens the sense of horror by adding an air of the perverse to the host. Raymond was more effective because Brown did not view the host's job as simply that of introducing the story. The host was there to tell jokes, to be your pal (if you would want such a pal), to guide you through the story, occasionally interjecting comments and even poetry during the mid-story commercial break. Raymond was sometimes genuinely, if morbidly, funny. Ol' Nancy and The Hermit were simply aged hosts with cracked voices. By contrast, Raymond possessed a deep but smooth voice full of menace, a fact that is probably not coincidental. Raymond delights in making light of horrors and misfortunes, something Ol' Nancy and The Hermit never did. Yes, they expressed their pity at the protagonist's fate at each episode's finish. But with Raymond we have a man who finds disappointment when the body count is low:

"Here we are, halfway through the story with only one shooting! And no corpses! If things don't pick up, I'm going to get in there myself and show them how to pour gore."

("Death By Scripture")

...or when the ending is happy and upbeat:

"Say! What's going on here? Two measly murders! And a happy ending! Bah!! The crowd down at the morgue are going to laugh at me for this. It won't be their last laugh either...."

("Till Death Do Us Part")

Raymond took his name from Raymond Edward Johnson, the actor who portrayed Raymond from the very first episode until 1945, when, apparently fearing typecasting for doing his job *too* well, he left the series. Johnson was replaced by Paul McGrath, who continued in the role of host until the final episode in October 1952. With Johnson's departure, the reference to "Raymond" was dropped, and McGrath simply called himself "your host." Some radio fans prefer one more than the other, while others cannot tell the two apart and could care less. Johnson seems to be the favorite because while McGrath got the funnier jokes, Johnson's voice was deeper and carried far more menace.

A lively Raymond often compensates for a lackluster story. This is where *Inner Sanctum* has an advantage: even if the story bores you, chances are you will still enjoy Raymond's perverse humor. This leads me to wonder how many *Inner Sanctum* fans of the 1940s were tuning in more for Raymond himself than for the stories which



he introduced.

Those stories are the subject of either admiration or derision, depending upon your view of horror. Some have stated that *Inner Sanctum* was not horror. They are wrong. *Inner Sanctum* is a new and different kind of horror. It is not for those of us who prefer chicken hearts, darkness that moves, and ancient curses that resurrect skeletons. *Lights Out!* had experimented with the psychological and the pseudo-supernatural before, but only infrequently. For *Inner Sanctum*, the psychological and the pseudo-supernatural are the main menu. As has often been said by fans of the series, emotion, not logic, was the key to *Inner Sanctum*. Events on *Inner Sanctum* are driven by the characters' emotions more often than they are by the horrors. Brown gets mileage not from the ghost in the graveyard—as *The Witch's Tale* did—but from the characters' hysterical reactions to seeing the ghost. The listener becomes absorbed in the characters' madness, not in the horror itself. The actors on *Inner Sanctum* excelled when it came time to act crazy. Brown knew how to key things up, build the suspense, chill the listener, make you forget your disappointment over the fact that the stalking ghost was either some vengeful living relative out to drive a sibling insane or merely the figment of a disturbed mind. The fake horrors that populate *Inner Sanctum* are much like Alfred Hitchcock's famous "MacGuffin": very important to plot and action, but relatively insignificant in and of themselves. To Brown, the pseudo-supernatural is not of great importance by itself. So the ghost wasn't really a ghost. Who cares? What counts is that your nerves are almost frayed after a tense thirty minutes. The imitators forgot this in their attempts to imitate *Inner Sanctum*, erring in placing the emphasis on those pseudo-horrors. That is why those imitators fail.

The highly improbable plots that characterize many *Inner Sanctum* broadcasts are best demonstrated by an episode such as "Only The Dead Die Twice," which is to my mind the quintessential *Inner Sanctum* episode. "Only The Dead Die Twice" is what this series was all about, filled with tense atmosphere, bright dialogue, numerous plot twists, and everyone acting their hearts out. A quick review of it will show just how many *Inner Sanctum* episodes worked:

Johnny Brice is a funeral hearse driver who hates his job. Returning home with the hearse one night, he finds a beautiful woman named Vera Craig on his front porch. She asks him if he wants to make \$1,000. Johnny says yes. Vera casually announces that she has murdered her husband, Alec, and that Alec is laying dead in their apartment. She needs Johnny to move the corpse for her. The

money and Vera's beauty overcome Johnny's revulsion at the idea. At the apartment, the super tells Johnny that Alec Craig has no wife. So Johnny goes up to the apartment where he finds Alec dead. His revulsion returning, Johnny tries to lam out, but at the front door he runs into Steve Maxton, a detective. Maxton received a call that there was a dead man in this apartment. He drags Johnny back into the room where Alec lay, only to find no corpse. Exit Maxton, enter Vera, who reveals that it was she who dumped Alec into a closet before Johnny and Maxton came into the room. Vera had come in the back way, which is how she wants Johnny to take Alec out. But Johnny refuses. Vera plays a trump: Maxton saw Johnny in this apartment. One phone call from Vera and Maxton would arrest Johnny for Alec's murder. So Johnny takes Alec's corpse out of the room and to a deserted cemetery where Vera meets him. But Maxton has followed Johnny. He accuses Johnny and Vera of having an affair. Turns out that Vera and Maxton are married. Johnny figures that Alec Craig was Vera's lover. Maxton, enraged, is set to shoot Johnny when Johnny overpowers him, rendering him unconscious. Vera cons Johnny into killing Maxton, even pulling the trigger for him while Johnny holds the gun. They bury Maxton and Johnny returns to the hearse to fetch Alec. But Alec is gone. When Johnny returns to the grave, he finds no Vera, but Alec is very much alive. Then Johnny understands: he's been played for a chump. Alec was never dead. It was all a trick to get Johnny to commit the murder of Maxton, whom Alec and Vera wanted out of the way so that they could live happily ever after. Johnny snaps. As Alec walks away, mocking him, Johnny leaps into the hearse and runs him down. Then he drives to Vera's place where he finds her waiting for Alec. Vera offers Johnny the money—offers him ten times the initial offer—offers him anything he wants. But Johnny has other ideas: he walks to the phone, dials the police, tells them he wants to report the murder of Vera Maxton. The murderer, says Johnny, is Johnny Brice.

This was the nature of this series, and the outrageousness of the plots was a constant in shows dealing with both the pseudo-supernatural and the psychological. I like to call the latter the "Bogus Horror" episodes; you may call them "cop outs" if it so pleases you. In such episodes, the horror in question is either some person made up to look like a living corpse or a ghost, or the horror is the figment of a guilty man's imagination. These were episodes like "Dead Man's Deal," wherein a two-bit gambler named Barney gets in over his head in a card game with a mobster named Joe Lester. When Barney cannot "see"

Joe's bet, Joe makes another type of bet: whomever holds the losing hand in the next round will kill himself. Barney agrees, but when he gets the losing hand, he kills Joe instead and rigs matters to look like a suicide, even changing a single card—the seven of hearts—to give Joe the losing hand. Soon thereafter, however, Barney receives a call about the "seven of hearts." Then a man begins following him—a man with a bleeding face. Of course it's all just a plot hatched by Lester's right hand man, designed to make Barney crack and confess. In "The Wailing Wall," a man seals his wife behind a living room wall. But he soon begins to hear her calling to him, her voice a pathetic moan. The husband soon fears leaving the house; he refuses any visitors. For forty years this goes on until he snaps and confesses his crime. Then the truth is revealed: what he had heard was the wind whistling through a crack in the wall at the point where he had sealed in his wife.

"Ghosts Always Laugh Last," "The Dead Walk At Night," "Shadow of Death," "Beyond The Grave," and countless others—pick any *Inner Sanctum* episode at random from a dealer's catalog and the chances are excellent you will end up obtaining a "Bogus Horror" show. Most have virtues that will soothe your irritation over being cheated—if you prefer to call it that.

Inner Sanctum did not often dabble in the area of the truly supernatural, but when it did it usually produced shows equal or superior to what was being offered on other horror series that specialized in the supernatural. In this respect it was much like *Suspense*, the famous radio program of mystery and suspense that experimented only occasionally with horror, but gave us such radio classics of the supernatural as "House In Cypress Canyon," "August Heat," and a sparkling two-part adaptation of Curt Siodmak's novel, *Donovan's Brain*.

Among the stories in this category, readers are advised to hear "Mark My Grave," which rates in my mind as the most chilling ghost story in all of radio. In "Mark," actor Lawson Zerbe plays Colby, a reporter dispatched to a small village to dig up the truth about the ghost of Luther Brenda. Colby is a real cynic about life. He doesn't believe in ghosts. But not long after arriving in town, he sees Luther's glowing white face outside a shop window. Up at the Luther estate, David, one of Luther's sons, tells Colby that Pa isn't in his crypt and then proves his point by opening the casket. An organ playing in the Brenda mansion's tower draws Colby towards the mansion. But before he can get there, the music stops and Walter, the eldest of the Brenda children, screams. Colby and David find him dead of apparent fright, seated like a child in front of the



organ. Back in the crypt, they find Luther now in his casket. It goes on like this until the climax. That's when Colby loses any hold he might have had on his sanity, and Zerbe goes all out with his over-the-top hysterical babblings of a man gone totally, convincingly, utterly, mad.

"Between Two Worlds" is of such a different chord that it at first seems out of place on *Inner Sanctum*. Fantasy is the term that might best describe this offering in which a low-life gangster, executed by a rival, is given a second chance to do something decent with his life by the ghost of an elderly man. The gangster must stop the ghost's living brother from absconding with the family fortune—a fortune obtained through murder. Along the way, the gangster meets up with a woman who has also been given a second chance at redeeming herself. These ghosts are no fakes; the supernatural is bona fide. "Vengeful Corpse" seems to be building towards the usual ending, but suddenly does an about-face in the last fifteen seconds. "Night Is My Shroud" features some of the eeriest moments in radio horror, as a tap dancer comes face-to-face with his doppelganger in a dark hotel room—an encounter that apparently gives the dancer the ability to kill people merely by wishing them dead. "The Man Who Could Not Die" details the evil deeds of a man who steals an elixir that will give him immortality. Unfortunately, he has to kill to get it. The police catch him, and he gets life in prison. It may not be supernatural, but it certainly is fantastic with no apologies offered (*Inner Sanctum* never offered excuses or apologies for its attitude).

Of course, not all *Inner Sanctum* episodes so stretched credibility. There were more mundane (but effective) episodes which play out almost like crime/suspense tales that would be more at home on *Suspense*. "Murder Comes At Midnight" details the duel of wits between Ethel Canning, a young housewife "who can't afford to be scared," and an escaped convict named Arnie Bishop, "The Gentleman Killer," who has hijacked and assaulted Ethel's husband as he returned home from work. With the hubby stuffed in the trunk, Bishop finds himself unable to escape the vicinity of the prison, due to a dragnet, from which he has just broken out. So he holes up in the Canning household where he proves to be an unsettling mixture of gentlemanly courtesy—he holds open the door for Ethel and compliments her on her cooking—and a cold-blooded killer who threatens to torch the Cannings' seven year old daughter if Ethel should attempt to contact the police. "So it's up to you to see to it that the police don't come," explains Bishop. "You're gonna lie for me, Mrs. Canning. And

you're going to cheat for me. And you're going to kill for me, if necessary. Because—I'll always have a match ready."

"A Corpse For Halloween" is another straight suspense tale concerning Jimmy Fox, an ex-hunter and jungle explorer stalked in the big city jungle by an ex-partner named Cavanaugh. Cavanaugh was supposed to have been killed five years earlier in the Burmese jungle, slain in an encounter with a tiger which Jimmy arranged. Maimed but alive, Cavanaugh now hunts Jimmy, using the "denizens of the city"—gangsters, thugs, etc.—to track down Jimmy, giving Jimmy twenty-four hours to live. If "Corpse" was film, it would be film noir. Other suspense and crime offerings include "Till Death Do Us Part," "I Walk In The Night," "Detour To Terror," "Corpse In The Cab," and many more. There isn't really a bad one in the lot. Disappointing, perhaps; but nothing truly bad as was the case with *The Haunting Hour* or *Dark Fantasy*.

Do not interpret all this warmth and praise to mean that this series did not have its faults. It did. And those faults are perhaps more evident today than fifty years ago due to the simple fact that *Inner Sanctum* fans today tend to listen to their shows one after the other, one or two a night instead of one a week. Thus the similarity of the plots does become obvious. Twist endings were popular on *Inner Sanctum*, but they are not always executed with success. Once you have learned to think in synch with Brown and the series' scriptwriters, you can see the ending coming by the commercial break of many episodes. The frequent revelation that the dead man is not dead can lead to a frustration with the series that no amount of twisted humor can alleviate. My "Big Complaint" about the series is the preponderance of jealous lovers plotting murders behind one another's backs. Too, the writers are clearly fond of that old *Inner Sanctum* standby, the mentally unbalanced individual. Use of such a

character allows Brown and the scriptwriters to give the listener fits trying to figure out whether the horror is real or just the workings of a fevered mind. But the inclination towards such gets old after the first few dozen or so. Still, despite this, I and so many other radio collectors return again and again to this show. We take a break to chase after other horror series, only to return before long, eager for more Raymond and for more of the *Inner Sanctum* approach to horror. *Inner Sanctum* may be lunacy, but it is inspired lunacy, a claim few of its competitors could make.

A few words need to be said about another important part of this series: the atmosphere. Sound effects, so crucial in the creation of atmosphere on



radio, were used to particular effect on *Inner Sanctum*. When it was night outside the house, Brown's sound effects department knew how to make you "feel" the night. You could hear the crickets chirping, the owl hooting, the wind blowing, and, through a few deft descriptive phrases courtesy of Raymond, you could see vividly in your mind's eye the ancient cemetery on the hill. Episodes such as "Shadow of Death," "Make Ready My Grave," "Mark My Grave," "Vengeful Corpse," and dozens of others ooze atmosphere. The foreshadowing in such episodes is skillfully done, executed through the use of the minor details that make a big difference. In "Make," for example, the writer uses open graves and nooses to convey the air of impending doom about the main characters. Nooses and open graves were old hat even by the 1940s, but they are surprisingly effective here. The dread and the pall of death which hangs over the characters is sustained throughout. I cannot think of too many other *Inner Sanctum* episodes that create a creeping sense of dread equal to "Make." You can almost "see" the darkness of the night; stifling, almost claustrophobic. It is an eerie work of audio drama so well done that by the climax you really don't care much whether or not the curse turns out to be a charade.

Additionally, Brown instructed his organist to never play a recognizable piece of music. Thus, the organist created musical "stings," a single sharp chord used to add emphasis to key lines of dialogue. *The Witch's Tale* and others did not make use of stings, and some radio shows acted as if background music did not matter. By using such, *Inner Sanctum* made sure you did not miss the lines designed to chill your blood.

The music. The host. The creaking door. The stories filled with snappy dialogue and vivid words. *Inner Sanctum* was all this and more. Like all great radio programs, this series excelled by doing everything well and doing it with a verve all its own—a verve that ensures that you do not mistake this series for another. This is the secret of *Inner Sanctum*, and not all the fake spooks or critics in the world can conceal that it was one helluva series.

Next time: Raymond was a stationary host. But *The Mysterious Traveler* was always going places, seated in the comfort of a train which came barreling out of the night once a week. *The Mysterious Traveler* is the first radio horror program to make a concerted effort to cover all branches of horror, moving deftly from the psychological to the supernatural to the crime story and even into the genres of fantasy and science-fiction.

A

Book Review

Lost Souls

by Poppy Z. Brite

Dell/Abyss, 1993; \$4.99

★★★ 1/2

Reviewed by Derek Hill

By now, there's been a lot written about Poppy Z. Brite's first novel, *Lost Souls*. The book has been both praised and scorned by many of the top "established" authors in the horror genre, and given an indifferent shrug from those who have heard only rumors of how daring and brutally dark the novel's vision is. From all the hyperbolic critiques grinding precariously through the rumormill, you would've thought that we'd been invaded by some strange—oh no! not that again!—new Master of Horror.

Lost Souls is now in paperback for the legions to ponder, and more importantly, to read, and judge for themselves how savage and anarchistic its vision truly is. Was it worth the wait?

Thankfully, the answer is a resounding yes. The main character of *Lost Souls* is a boy by the name of Nothing, who as a hopelessly lonely fifteen-year old trying to exist alongside the everyday banalities of a spiritually dead world, yearns to run riot in the everlasting night of his dreams, where starlight and sex are eternally intertwined, pain and pleasure indivisible, and where being different actually means something real, something dangerous. A dream of escape which the average teenager can well identify with. Except for one little thing.

Nothing is a vampire. There are many memorable characters in *Lost Souls*, such as Ghost, Christian, and the most splendidly vicious vampires this side of the end of the world, whom Nothing eventually joins up with and ultimately learns the true meaning of "all in the family".

Lost Souls is a book intimate in scope, but vast in its moral and personal ambiguities. By wiping away the polite, superhero posturing which has plagued Anne Rice's recent vampire excursions, and insisting on plunging the reader into the attractive/repellant world of these starry-eyed children of shadows and nightfall with open eyes, Brite has succeeded in conjuring up insights into the decadent world beneath the meat and bone, where the poetry of a beating heart is beautiful any way you cut it.

But this book and its author should not be condemned to stand in the shadows behind all the other vampire offerings. *Lost Souls* is too unique and wonderfully strange for such a death sentence.

Midnight Horrors

The Real Werewolves

by
William
Schoell

Werewolves don't exist And yet they are walking among us.

In their human guise, werewolves look and generally act like everybody else. Only their victims ever see their ferocious, bestial side, and they aren't able to tell anyone about it. When their remains are found, everyone knows a werewolf is on the loose, and everyone gets scared.

So it is with serial killers.

Last summer I returned from a trip to Boston and took a break from unpacking to glance at the evening paper. There was some headline about a serial killer, but I didn't pay much attention to it. Flipping through the inside pages, I suddenly saw a photograph of an acquaintance of mine, and those words "serial killer" jumped out at me again.

Surely he couldn't be a serial killer, I thought. No, it was worse than that.

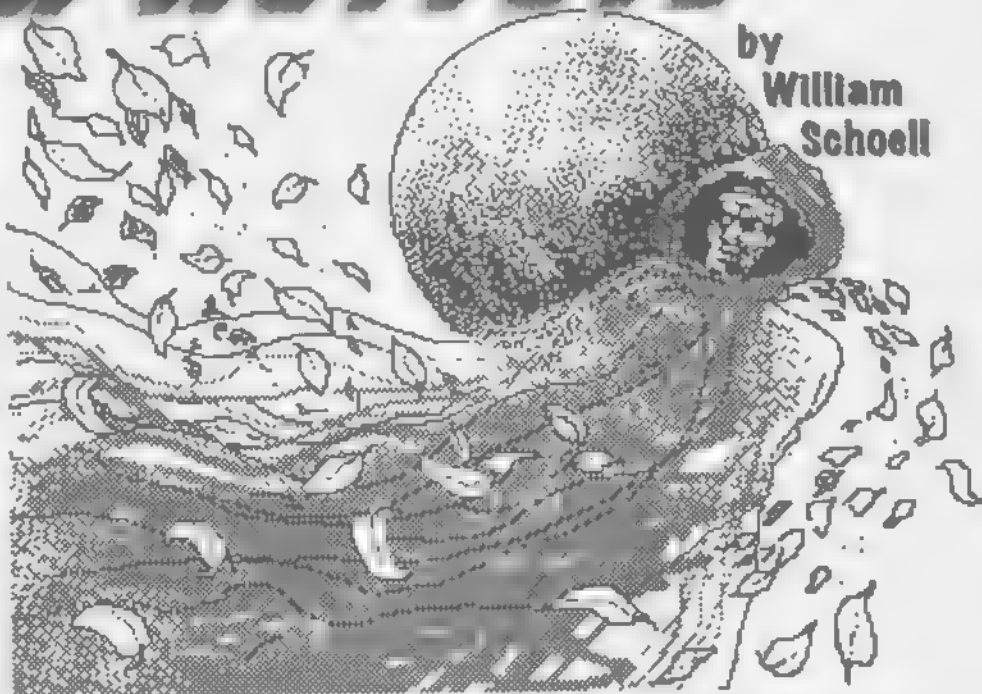
He was one of the victims.

I was shocked, and immediately called other people who also knew the victim. The more details I got, the more horrible it sounded. Michael D. left a bar at 4 am with someone he had struck up an acquaintance with, and was never seen alive again. Part of his body was found across the river in New Jersey; the rest floating in the Hudson, I later learned he was killed with a hacksaw.

This is like something out of the movies, I thought. Like something out of one of my novels. (Although I have never actually written a serial killer novel.)

It would have been bad enough if Michael had died in some other way—he was a likable, cheery person—if he had been in an auto accident, or shot by a mugger (unlikely, but not necessarily impossible, in my relatively low-crime New York neighborhood), but this was unbelievably awful. An inoffensive human being had been horribly murdered in a way I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy.

Besides my being upset with what had happened to Michael and how his close friends and family would feel, there was something deeper and more personal at work. "Why are you so upset?" one friend asked me. "You didn't even know him all that well." (How well do you have to know somebody before you can feel *something* over such a grotesque death?) I tried to explain, but it was difficult to do to someone who was not particularly interested in the horror field.



Let's face it: all of us who write and read horror stories never really figure that someone we know will die like the victims in those fictional works. I had figured my chances of "encountering" a serial killer, even in this rather distant manner—was about as likely as my running, into a blood-drinking vampire a la Dracula, the fact that we hear about serial killers all the time notwithstanding. It brought my life one step closer to that shadowy, horrible nightmare world that all of us wish would remain strictly imaginary. (Of course, whatever I was going through was *nothing* compared to the suffering of the victim and his loved ones.)

Michael was the fourth or fifth victim of this particular killer. Almost immediately, some people made the usual sick jokes or indulged in the pastime of "blaming the victim." "Michael was a drunk; he couldn't protect himself" or "what was he doing going off with that guy anyway?" My answer to that is: who cares? Whether Michael just wanted a lift home or had private sexual peccadilloes is irrelevant, as is whether he went willingly or at gunpoint. He was stalked and slaughtered by one fucked-up, scuzzy human being—and I use the term loosely.

The really horrible thing was that this creep wasn't the only serial killer to make N.Y. headlines that week. Joel Rifkin, the loser who preyed on prostitutes, was captured about that time, and as if it didn't have enough problems—the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant played host to a maniacal shooter (the reason this sleazoid was classified as a serial killer and not just lumped in with the usual druggies, gang members, and homicidal muggers in the city's worst crime district was because he just shot people but didn't rob them).

There have always been serial killers, but never have there been *so many*. And they don't walk round mumbling to themselves or with the word "whacko" stamped on their forehead. The police theorized, as they usually do, that this particular killer was charming, polite, attractive—and the last person you'd suspect of being a homicidal sociopath. There was much speculation among those of us who knew the victim as to *who* this creature could be, and if we were acquainted with him. That the killer is someone we know has not yet been discounted.

Meanwhile, I watch aghast as popular culture tries its best to turn serial killers into some sort of anti-heroes. Fans of the movie of SILENCE OF THE LAMBS want Hannibal Lecter to go after that slimy official at the end. A columnist in *Afraid* thinks it would be neat if there were a museum devoted to serial killers. The overrated kinky filmmaker John Waters comes out with the comedy *Serial Mom*. On a TV talk show, a geeky Manson look-alike and a fat, sneering teenage girl defend John Wayne Gacy and Jeffrey Dahmer and suggest that they only killed "the scum of the earth" anyway, so like, why not give them a medal? And sunken-chested losers across the country collect serial killer cards trading cards because they think S.K.s are so "cool." Give me a break.

I was turned off by grisly psycho-on—the-loose movies for awhile because certain scenes only reminded me uncomfortably of the details of Michael's death, and occasionally I still get certain *frissons*. (I had to wait a full year before I could even write this article.) But I knew I wouldn't be turned off of horror movies—even the latest *Friday the 13th* installment—for good, because I enjoy them too much. Oddly enough, they're escapism from the unpleasant realities of life. Like serial killers. But there's a big difference between enjoying the antics of fictional killers and *celebrating* the anti-human activities of sociopaths.

Serial killers don't just murder and dismember their victims. They torment them and torture them; they *terrorize* them. Whether they choose their victims from life's fringes or from the wholesome mainstream, they take advantage of people's strengths (good samaritanism, for instance) as well as their weaknesses. They are disassociated, conscienceless, pathetic, cowardly misfits and monsters—not "cool" non-conformists.

Psycho remains my favorite movie. But I never thought "Norman Bates" was *cool*.

Anyway, along with the increase in real life serial killers comes the proliferation of fictional S.K.s. There's no getting around the fact that we can't help but find some-

thing intrinsically fascinating about serial killers and their methods (which is quite different from glorifying them). After Michael's death, I found myself almost masochistically drawn to non-fictional accounts of their exploits, primarily because I wanted to a.) find out what makes them tick, and b.) learn to *recognize* one if I could. I told myself I was not doing research. I had no desire to exploit someone's tragedy by writing about it.

But when I read serial killer novels, I was struck by how superficial they were for the most part. Mary Higgins Clark (what was I expecting?) wrote one called *Loves Music, Loves to Dance* in which the climactic scene—wherein the heroine finally realizes the man she's dating is the serial killer and she's trapped in his stronghold—had as much tension and terror as, one of the duller scenes in a Nancy Drew juvenile mystery. Ms. Clark even bragged at the end about how she talked to policemen, and saw photos of victims, and yet she was completely unable to get across the true *evil* and horror of the situations.

I'm not suggesting Clark should have piled on the graphic gore or melodramaticized, but there is something obscene about trivializing the behavior of serial killers so that you're no more chilled than you would be by, say, Carolyn Keene's *Secret of the Old Clock*. Other, more intense serial killer novels seem to focus mostly on the detectives, or plumb the depths of the killer's mind, but victims were almost always given short shrift.

I then thought about doing my own serial killer novel (which I had never had any interest in before), but one that showed the effects of the sicko's actions on the loved ones of the victim. It would not be a, thriller, *per se*. I told myself I was not being exploitative, that a writer must write about what happens in his world and obsesses him. (I haven't quite convinced myself.) In a world in

which people band together to *protest* the execution of Ted Bundy, a man who kidnapped, assaulted, tortured, murdered, and dismembered *dozens* of women, I think we all need an occasional reminder that it's the victims who matter.

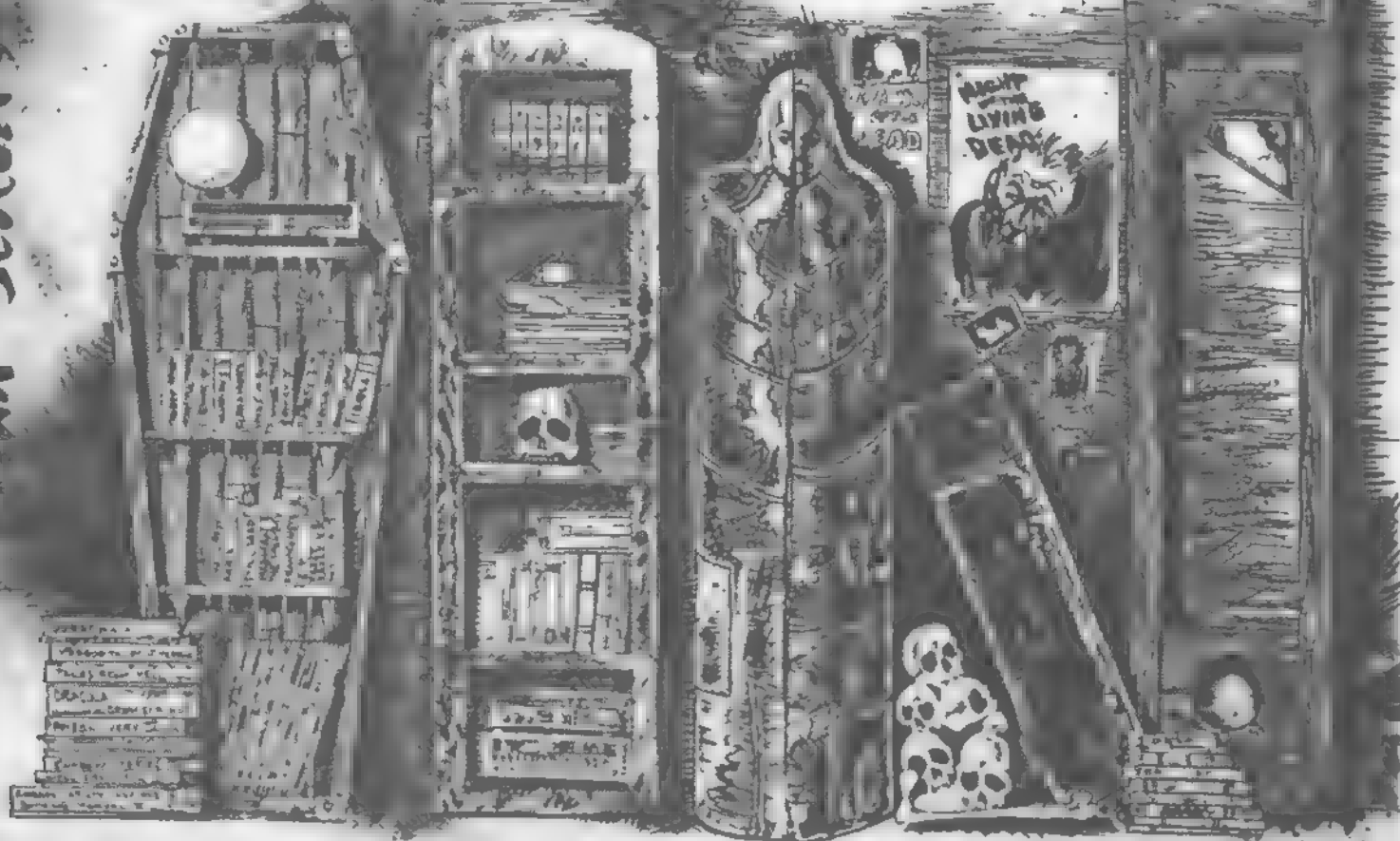
I don't know about you, but I could use a good werewolf movie right about now. That old gypsy woman (played by the inimitable Maria Ouspenskaya)—"even a man who says his prayers" and so on—may have known what she was talking about.

William Schoell is the author of *Stay Out of the Shower: 25 Years of Shocker Films Beginning with "Psycho."*



Bookshelves of Blood

John Scoles



Welcome once again to my corner of the factory...there's always room for one more victim, so just push your way past the shambling corpses (that would be Peter and Bob) and find a place to sit.

Before I jump into this issues fun and games, I need to mention a few things I brought up last issue. Several people have called to complain about the low supply of Lon Chaney postage stamps available. As I failed to remind you last time out, *Scream Factory* founder Peter is still working for the post office, and as you may not know, he recently purchased a home in beautiful Hell's Breath, Arizona. Apparently, he bought out the entire run of the Chaney stamp to wallpaper his new mansion. The good news is you're welcome to drop by anytime...it's the luxurious house (the one that looks like the Bates place) that flies the Forrest J. Ackerman flag 365 days a year!

Some day I'll learn not to end my column by announcing what I'll be covering in the next one. If you've followed my ramblings through the years, you're aware of my sporadic appearances, and c'mon, we're quarterly, so you never can tell what surprises will pop up from one issue to the next. Which is a drawn out way of saying that my review of Richard Matheson's *Earthbound* (promised in *TSF* #4—the first installment of *BoB*, by the way) is finally here, to coincide with the Tor hardcover release. The bad news is my review of the deluxe *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* laserdisc, promised just last issue, is not here, as the disc has fallen victim to delays all too common in the laserdisc market. I do have some detailed info about the disk set to wet your appetite, and this seems like as good an item as any to officially kick off this column.

In a brief conversation with the president of Elite Entertainment, the company producing the NOTLD disc, I was able to procure a list of the many features of this long

overdue release. The disc will unfortunately not be presented in a letterbox format, contrary to the original release information, nor will it be remastered to stereo surround sound (an idea that had been tossed around early on). That minor setback aside, the film has been mastered from supposedly the finest source material available (itself unfortunately not pristine), under the auspices of the THX laserdisc program. If you're unfamiliar with the term, associate it with 'the highest industry standards.' Anyhow, among the extensive supplementary materials, one will find: Dual full-running audio commentary by George Romero and the majority of the surviving cast members; the final audio interview with the late Duane Jones (approx. 20 minutes); Over 500 b&w and 20 color stills; television and theatrical trailers; the original screenplay; profiles on the cast, crew, The Latent Image, and Hardman/Eastman Associates; photos of various props, posters, and other collectibles; 5 or 6 of George Romero's early television commercials; Excerpts from The Latent Image's next and rarely seen *THE AFFAIR* featuring several NOTLD cast members; and the entertaining spoof, *NIGHT OF THE LIVING BREAD*. Not bad for \$90, as special editions go.

The disc should be available by the time you read this, so run out and buy a laserdisc player if you haven't already (considering such treasures as widescreen editions of *THE OMEGA MAN*, *CREEPSHOW*, and *ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13* have all become available in the last month). Heck, even Peter's been tossing the idea around, and we all know what a technophobe he is. For those of you who aren't ready to make the laser plunge, Elite has announced that they will be releasing a VHS version, lacking the majority of the supplements, of course, that will be the first fully authorized videotape edition of NOTLD. And for the reasonable \$10 price tag, you'll get the film, the trailers, and *NIGHT OF THE LIVING BREAD*. 'Nuff said.

The first book off the shelf this time out is none other than Douglas Clegg's long overdue *Dark of the Eye* (Pocket Books, 1994, 325 pages, \$5.99). As a big fan of Doug's work, I had been waiting for almost two years for a new Clegg novel. Once again, Doug delivers the goods.

When I started this book, I was privy to the fact that it had originally been planned as the first in a series of books, so when I reached it's satisfying yet abrupt conclusion, the book did not quite reach the velocity of Tom Monteleone's *Blood of the Lamb* as it flew across the room. Actually, I'm kidding. The book is like a complex puzzle for the first two-thirds, and the final third is an explanatory roller-coaster ride that at times matches his dynamite *Goat Dance* for sheer originality. Friends of mine who read the book walked away saying, "this guy is really twisted." A finer complement probably can't be given.

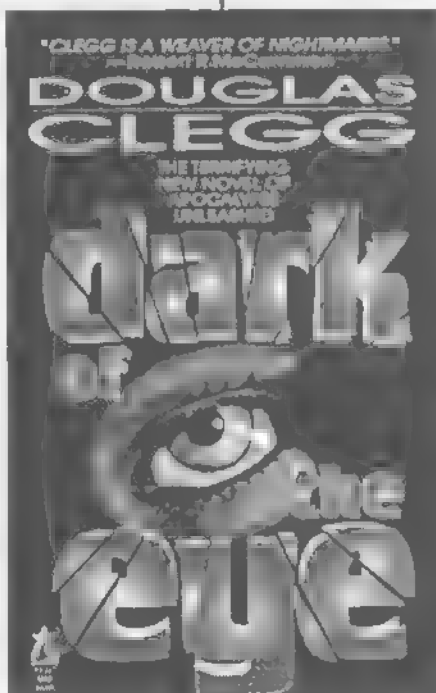
The story is of young Hope Stewart and her mother, who are fleeing from her father and a rather despicable government agent. As we eventually learn, Hope has some very unique talents that come about from her interaction with people. The long and the short of it—she can help or hurt people with her touch. The sick can be healed, or the sick can get worse, but they have one thing in common—when dead, they don't really die. All of which make for some interesting circumstances, which, when you add in Doug's own carnival of freaks, like lovable Poppy, adds up to a bizarre twist on the 'gifted child' theme.

The book's biggest drawback is the intensity of the first two-thirds. It's easy to get lost along the way, as you don't really come to understand everything until the book's final third, where it really takes off. Add to this the fact that the book, while not without a resolution, leaves the reader hanging after they've finally gotten to know the characters and their special talents. Upon close examination, the book does seem like an introduction to a much larger work. If Clegg does continue this story, and I hope that he does, I expect that the next volume will really soar.

Last issue I spent a fair amount of space drooling about *THE CROW*, and I'm pleased this time to mention Jeff Conner's new book on the making of the film, *The Crow: The Movie* (Kitchen Sink Press, 1994, 112 pages, \$14.95), which coincides with the film's video release.

Conner, of *Scream/Press* fame, who worked as a publicist on the film, traces the movie from its comic book origins through the fateful accident that took star Brandon Lee's life. While the text is sparse, the volume is packed with production photos, the majority of which have not previously been published. This is the true value of the book. While there are several interesting comments from cast and crew members and some interesting descriptions of scenes that were altered, the text seems to be less than comprehensive. In fact, the book ends abruptly after a page describing the digital techniques used to replace Brandon Lee after the accident.

While *The Crow: The Movie* is a must-have for fans of Brandon Lee and the film, the final word on the making of *THE CROW* has yet to be written.



When reviewing encyclopedic books on film, I always check to see if the author and I agree on certain films. Usually, those which I love and those which I hate. Well, based on this test, I knew I was going to enjoy Stuart Galbraith's *Japanese Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films* (McFarland, 1993, 488 pages, \$45). He and I agreed that *GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE* was the "most poetic film of the series to date" (his words), and that *TETSUO: THE IRON MAN* was a piece of crap (my words).

The book covers films from 1950-1992, which is the only drawback, as in the last few years Toho has revived the Godzilla franchise. The book is made up of a chronological listing of films and their descriptions, followed by an extensive (I imagine the most extensive to date) filmography of each Japanese studio, and an Appendix listing the various other appearances Godzilla has made over the years, including an all-too-brief mention of the cartoon series.

Fortunately, Galbraith has the right outlook to be doing a book of this nature. While it would be easy to write off any value in films such as *YOG: MONSTER FROM SPACE*, or any one of the Gamera films, Galbraith offers up a straightforward description of each film's plot (or lack thereof), followed by a fair criticism of the film, judged in the context of the particular film. Obviously, one cannot look at the films of Akira Kurosawa and compare them to Inoshiro Honda's Godzilla efforts. Each film has it's own distinct audience, and Galbraith is able to discern between the two.

While he and I disagree on *GODZILLA'S REVENGE* (come to think of it, everyone disagrees with me on this film), I respect his opinion. After reading his comments, I'm interested in searching out several films, especially the Majin movies, which alas, are not available on video in the U.S.

As much as I enjoyed this book, I cannot overlook the glaring lack of illustrations. The addition of photos throughout would have made this the Japanese equivalent to McFarland's *Universal Horrors*. As I imagine most readers would, I found myself wondering if I had seen some of the more obscure films, questions that surely could have been answered by the inclusion of illustrations. Oh, well. you can't have everything.

Way back in 1982, Playboy paperbacks released a novel by Logan Swanson called *Earthbound*. This was the same Logan Swanson who wrote the screenplay for *THE LAST MAN ON EARTH*, as well as a few short stories here and there, usually appearing alongside the much more famous Richard Matheson. Well, as it turned out, Swanson and Matheson were one and the same, Swanson being a pseudonym Matheson used to distance himself from the work (except in the case of the short stories, which was more of a David Schow-Chan McConnell kind of relationship).

Unhappy with the way the book was edited, Matheson re-issued it in 1989 in a corrected form, from the English publisher Robinson. Well, years later, Tor books has gotten around to releasing it domestically (Tor, 1994, \$19.95, 223 pages). While it's great the book has finally made it to local shores, the production values liken this book to a Science Fiction Book Club offering.

As for the book itself, it is not one of Matheson's more memorable works. Which

is not to say that it's bad, it's just that for a man whose body of work includes *I Am Legend*, *The Shrinking Man*, and *Hell House*, certain standards were set early on that this book doesn't live up to.

David and Ellen Cooper travel to an isolated cottage to work on their waning marriage, only for David to become involved with a mysterious woman who turns out to be much more than the standard extramarital affair partner. It's a rather straightforward concept that doesn't throw a whole lot of surprises at the reader. With all of the classics he's written, as well as all of the new works recently (including a new western from Evans, *Shadow on the Sun*), this is a Matheson that you can buy and let sit on the shelf for a while.

The last book on the slab this issue is David Schow's third collection of short fiction, *Black Leather Required* (Ziesing, 1994, 244 pages, \$29.95). Made up of thirteen tales—ten reprints, three originals—Schow's latest collection reminds us what a talent he truly is.

Of the three originals, I have to admit that I found one to be a little too Joe Lansdale-weird-like ("Scoop Makes a Swirly"), and while I enjoyed the relatively simple Grand Guignol play "Beggar's Banquet, with Summer Sausage," about zombies and drunks in the cemetery (I'd pay to be pelted by flying rubber organs), it would surely work better on a stage. "Sand Sculpture" is a surprisingly interesting take on the 'living life over again' theme, though for the man involved, I'm sure he could have picked a better year to continually cycle through. It's one of three stories in the collection that all deal in a way with relationships, an area that Schow has got a real knack for.

The other two tales of this type are also very entertaining. "Life Partner" deals with a woman who's significant other becomes the ideal man only after after he dies. "Where the Heart Was" is a fun spurned-husband-who-won't-stay-dead story. What makes it even better is the manner in which the other characters respond to him.

While "Pitt Night at the Lewistone Boneyard" and Jerry's Kids meet Wormboy" are fun, I don't think either really showcases what Schow is capable of. For those specs, read "The Shaft," the short story from which the very powerful novel was derived.

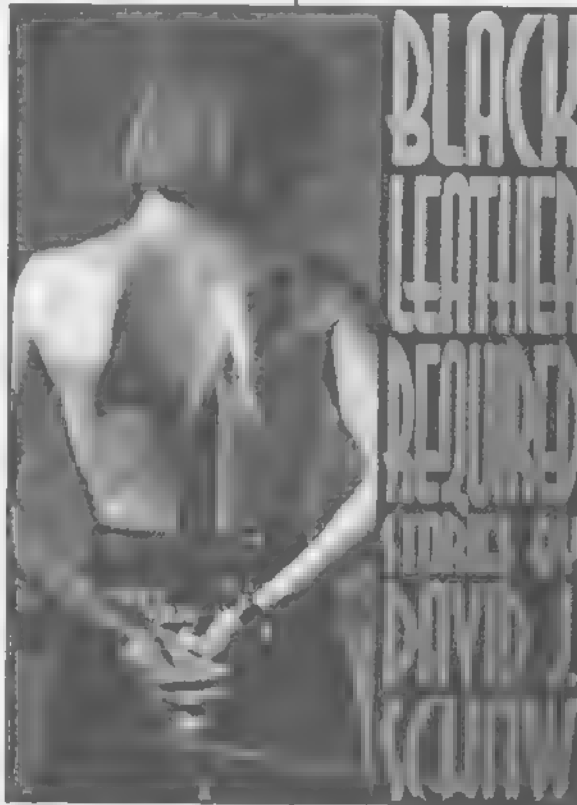
A couple of my favorite Schow pieces are also in this collection, including his two dino-horror stories, "Sedalia" and "Kamikaze Butterflies," and the loving tribute to the classic Universal monsters, "Last Call for the Sons of Shock." I would have loved to hear Schow reading that one along with Skipp and Spector during their college tour.

The last story in the book, "Bad Guy Hats" is the one that delivers the most powerful punch. Quentin Tarrantino fans will surely love this one. I haven't encountered such interesting, slimy characters in a long time. Not since Joe Lansdale's "Night

They Missed the Horror Show" have I read a story that really hit me like this one did. But, being in such company is a high complement, one that Schow very much deserves.

As is common with Schow's work, we are treated to notes following most of the stories, as well as a lengthy Afterword in which Schow thoughtfully examines writing short stories in the genre. I often am as fascinated by Schow's non-fiction as I am by his prose. To this day, I would rate his "Endsticks" in *Silver Scream* (perhaps the finest theme anthology the genre has seen, assembled under Schow's editorial guidance) as one of the most entertaining entries in the book.

Despite the hefty price tag, this book is an entertaining volume to keep you occupied while waiting for an American release of his excellent novel, *The Shaft*.

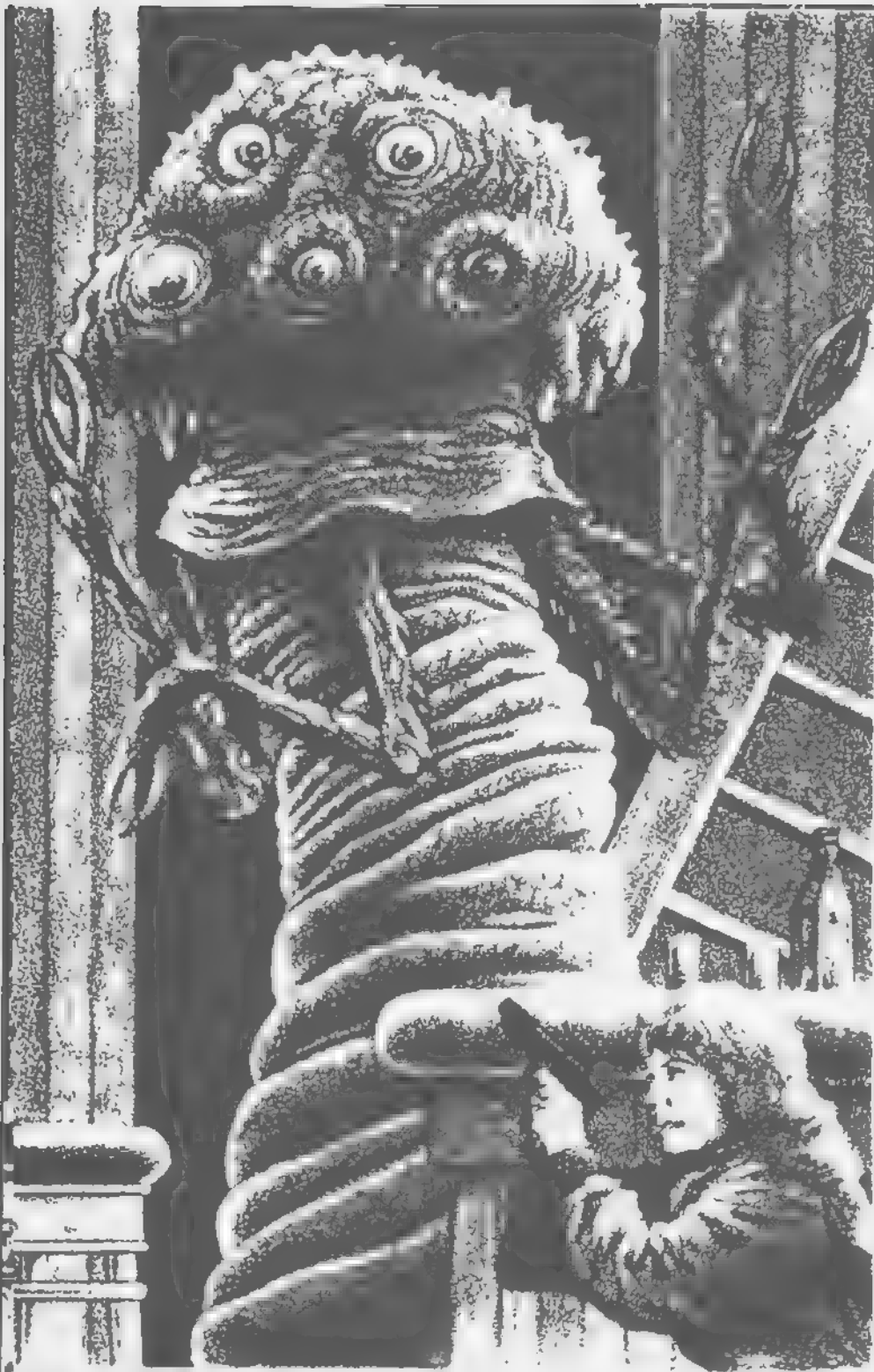


Before I close out this column, I just want to mention the two greats we lost since the last issue came out. Peter Cushing, the last of the true horror screen legends, is someone I will always fondly remember. I have too many favorite films to mention here, but I imagine it will be his Van Helsing, making the cross out of the candelabras, that will always represent him. In the literary world, we lost the last living connection to the Lovecraft circle, Robert Bloch. Bob, Peter, and I were fortunate enough to meet him a few times in the last several years, after sporadic written correspondence. He was a truly kind gentleman, and his contributions to the genre will never be forgotten thanks to the worldwide appeal of *Psycho*.

That's it for now. For those of you who are computer users out there, send e-mail to me through America Online. I lurk around under the name RESRVOR-DOG, and can often be found hanging out in weird chat rooms with Peter, aka DIE POOL (Bob's usually

too busy working on the magazine for such frivolous undertakings, but you can reach him via mail to LORD BUCK). If you haven't got America Online, go the e-mail route to RESRVOR-DOG@aol.com. I'm always interested to hear what people think of our ever-growing baby. Until next time, keep the theater lights down and the volume up!

<i>Dark of the Eye</i>	★★
<i>The Crow: The Movie</i>	★ 1/2
<i>Japanese Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror</i>	★★★
<i>Earthbound</i>	★ 1/2
<i>Black Leather Required</i>	★★★



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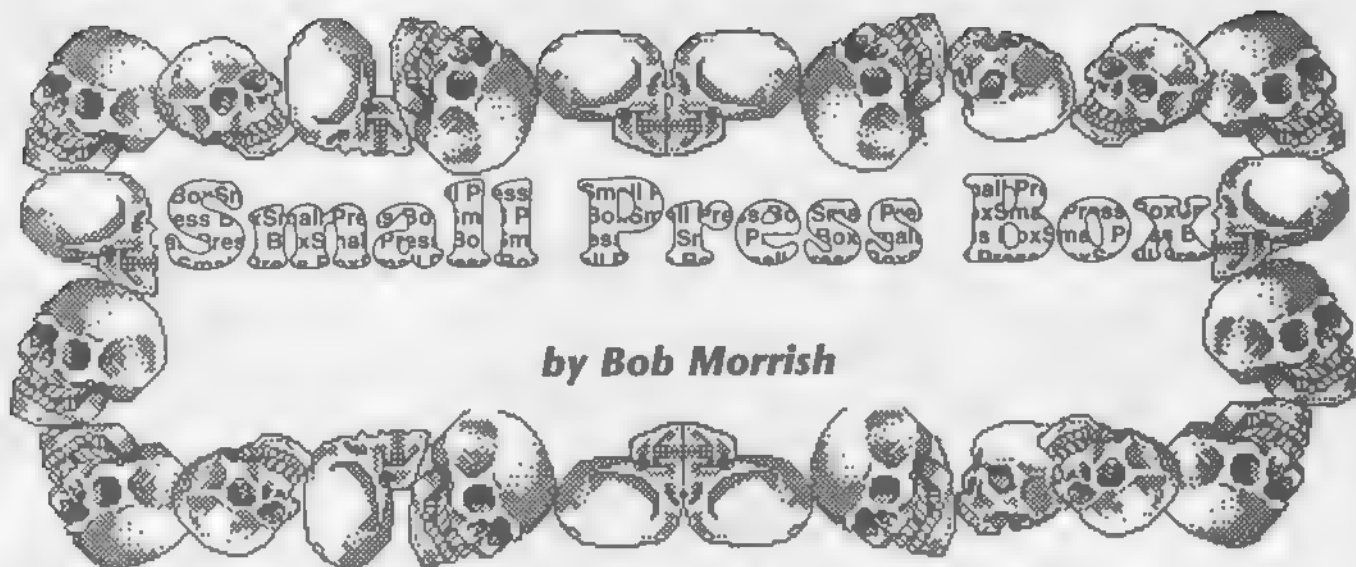
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"a good selection...consider picking up *Quick Chills* for a taste of contemporary horror where it brews best—the underground."

— *Weird Tales*

"A very entertaining read."

— *Small Press Magazine*



by Bob Morrish

We've got a real variety of books to look at this time, from a number of different publishers, including a couple of new ones. So without further delay...

Inagehi

by Jack Cady

Broken Moon Press, 1994; 258 pgs.; \$13.95

P.O. Box 24585, Seattle, WA 98124-0585

★★★

Since being featured in our *What The Hell Ever Happened To...?* column in *TSF* #9, Jack Cady has undergone a career renaissance of sorts (too bad we can't take credit for spurring it): the collection *The Sons of Noah* appeared from Broken Moon last year and won a World Fantasy Award; a second collection is scheduled to appear from Arkham House; the novel *Street* was released in September by St. Martins; this novel, *Inagehi*, was recently published by Broken Moon, for the most part to great acclaim. Having read and enjoyed *The Sons of Noah*, I viewed *Inagehi* with great anticipation—an anticipation that was, for the most part, rewarded.

The plot is set in 1957 North Carolina, centering around a 30-year-old Cherokee woman named Harriette Johnson and an ancient nearby mountain range. The recent death of Harriette's mother leads to Harriette's discovery that her father's death (seven years earlier) was the result of murder, not an accident as she had been led to believe. Her subsequent investigation leads to her acquaintance with a number of interesting characters: an elderly former history teacher named Warwick, who

helps with the investigation; the former Sheriff, Blaine, one of the few Caucasian characters in the book, who's still bitter about not catching Dan Johnson's killers, and about the stonewalling of his original investigation by the local Cherokee; Johnny Whitcomb, a former friend and co-worker of Dan Johnson, who becomes Harriette's primary protector; Lewis Corey, a wise—yet not stereotypical—Cherokee whose seeming omniscience, placid demeanor, and measured speech seem almost mythic—a characteristic shared by several others here.

Inagehi is a slowly-paced (at times perhaps a bit too slowly), richly-textured story that yields much to the patient reader. As the tale unfolds, one gathers a gradual appreciation of the preternatural power and presence of the mountains themselves, the traditions and beliefs of the Cherokee, and the will and fortitude of Harriette. This deliberate novel isn't for everyone, but Cady's eloquent prose will likely reward those who take the journey.



Donald R. Burleson

Four Shadowings

Illustrated by Robert H. Knox

Four Shadowings

by Donald Burleson

Necronomicon Press, 1994; 44 pgs.; \$5.95

P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick, RI 02893

★★ 1/2

The dedication to this quartet of tales reads "for Ramsey Campbell," and that author's influence is readily apparent throughout these pages. Yet Burleson's efforts do not seem derivative so much as they do inspired.

Take, for example, "The Wind at the Top of the Trees," in which a house's new occupant learns that a horrible little boy who lived there previously managed to instill an evil presence into a beech tree in the house's

yard. At one point, the new occupant sees the amorphous evil slither down out of the tree:

"...it drew off to one side of the trunk, the side nearest the house, and ran root-like out onto the grass, trailing strands of froth behind it. Dan, backing away, began to hope that he was hallucinating, that he was out of his mind, when in the intermittent flashes of lightning the thick liquid presence on the grass seemed to draw itself up into a shape, a vague sinewy form that drew sticky arms webbed and wing-like out from its middle and suspended them dancing and jittering over what might have been its head."

In "Blue Luke," the evil emanates from a hole in the ground in a private family graveyard, a hole in which family members over the years have deposited various excretions—feces, vomit, menstrual blood—representing the purging of their sins. Unfortunately, those excretions have coalesced into Blue Luke, the family name for "the outrageous composite of all the evil that members of the family had sought to divest themselves of."

"One Night Strand" involves a guest at a cheap motel who's disturbed by late-night noises from the room next door. He investigates, only to discover a disturbing scene of sexual deviance with an otherworldly creature. This is the least "Campbellian" of the tales here, but is nonetheless a fun and chilling bit. "A Student of Geometry" is the tale that's perhaps most reminiscent of Ramsey, but it meanders too much amongst its ambiguities and becomes tedious.

Four Shadowings is another fine entry in Necronomicon Press' fiction line, and Necro Press fiction editor Stefan Dziemianowicz deserves credit for consistently picking winners for the line.

Spectrum: The Best In Contemporary Fantastic Art
 Edited by Cathy Burnett and Arnie Fenner
 Underwood Books, 1994; 116 pgs.; \$18.95
 P.O. Box 1607, Grass Valley, CA 95945
 ★★★ 1/2

Every once in a while, something comes along that's such a wonderful concept and so well-executed that it makes people say "what a great idea. Why didn't someone

think of that a long time ago." *Spectrum* is just such a thing.

Consider: there are a number of annual "best of" fiction anthologies in various genres—even the much-maligned horror genre has three such anthologies—but there have been no genre-oriented best-of-the-year collections for illustrations, not even in the visually rich field of speculative fiction. Until now.

Underwood Books (formerly 1/2 of Underwood-Miller) recently released *Spectrum*, the first of what is hoped will be an annual series of volumes. If commercial success were based upon product quality, then *Spectrum* would be guaranteed to be a big-seller and an annual occurrence. This is a breathtakingly beautiful collection, comprising something on the order of 150 illustrations from a variety of media. The pieces are grouped in the following categories: editorial; advertising; books; comics; institutional; unpublished; plus a final section presenting the winners of the Chesley awards. Many of the illustrations will be familiar to genre fans, but just as many should prove unfamiliar, especially in view of the diverse source material.



There are far too many wonderful pieces to try and mention even a representative sampling, but I nonetheless want to mention a few favorites of mine. Here are just a few: Rick Berry's rich, patchwork futuristic image of a sensuous woman with six-gun on shapely hip; Barclay Shaw's organic/industrial

illustration, replete with Calvin Klein-style lounging models; Gnemo's haunting B&W images of a child and evil shaman standing on a floor littered with skulls; Arnie Fenner's gradient, pencil-sketch-to-lushly-painted facial portrait; Don Maltz' incredibly colorful and intricate work; Simon Bisley's steaming bio-mechanic Terminator; Scott Gustafson's remarkable interpretation of classic fairy tale images; Myles Pinckney's blazing fire-woman; James Gurney's teeming, complex tapestries.

I try not to be overly generous in assigning four-star ratings, but this volume would easily receive a four-star rating, were it not for two minor annoyances. First, it would be nice if the specific presentation medium (i.e., book title, magazine issue, etc.) were listed, rather than just the "client." Second—and more troubling—the artist index lists page numbers, while the pages themselves lack numbers (the illustrations are numbered, which only serves to

confuse). All in all though, I heartily recommend *Spectrum*, particularly in the economically priced trade paperback edition.

The 1995 Lovecraftian Horror Calendar
Artefact Publications,
1210 Greene St., Ste. 4,
Boone IA 50036; \$9.95
★★ 1/2

While we're on the subject of art, here's a nifty little wall calendar featuring a dozen top artists' B&W interpretations of scenes from classic Lovecraftian stories. Viewed sequentially, we have work by Robert Knox, H.E. Fassl, John Borkowski, Rodell D. Sanford, Jr., Randy Broecker, Tom Sullivan, John T. Snyder, Phil Reynolds, Jason C. Eckhardt, Eymoth, Allen Koszowski, and Dave Carson.

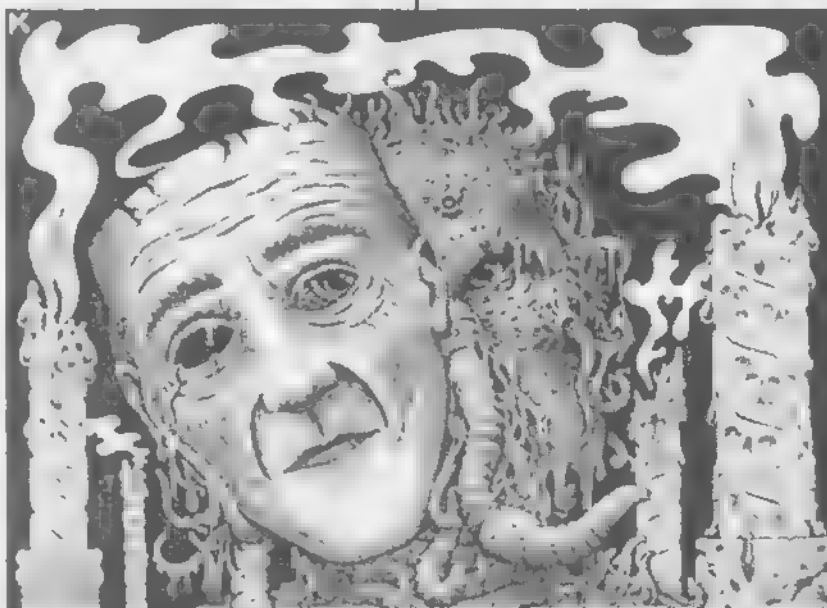
My favorites are Sanford's stylish multi-colored image, featuring a nasty insectoid creature; Sullivan's stark close-up of a Cthulhoid "face"; Reynolds' presentation of a looming visage over a haunted landscape; Carson's classic fave-behind-the-face (reproduced here). In addition to the wonderful artwork, there are a plethora of interesting facts—primarily birthdates of genre luminaries and debut dates of important films and TV series—listed throughout the calendar.

I've always been a sucker for horror-oriented calendars, and the *1995 Lovecraftian Horror Calendar* is sure to occupy a favored spot on my wall. This is a nice product at a nice price.

Vampire Junkies
by Norman Spinrad
Gryphon Publications, 1994; 76 pgs.;
\$9.95
P.O. Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228
★★ 1/2

Halfway through this novella, I was planning on giving it a less than glowing review. To be fair, that wasn't because of any particular shortcoming on Spinrad's part—I've enjoyed his efforts in past books such as *Iron Dreams* and *Bug Jack Barron*—but rather because of my general dislike for the blackly comedic, tongue-in-cheek style displayed here. However, over the remainder of the story, Spinrad's infectious humor won me over, at least partially.

Vampire Junkies is narrated through



the alternating viewpoints of the one and only Count Dracula—who views himself as an honorable aristocrat making the best of his difficult situation—and Mary, a hard core, street-wise, heroin-addicted prostitute, whose narcotic-laced blood shackles Drac with a second feverish addiction. The Count's initial infatuation with Mary—based upon the blissful sensations he experiences after dining on her blood—soon turns to a feeling of

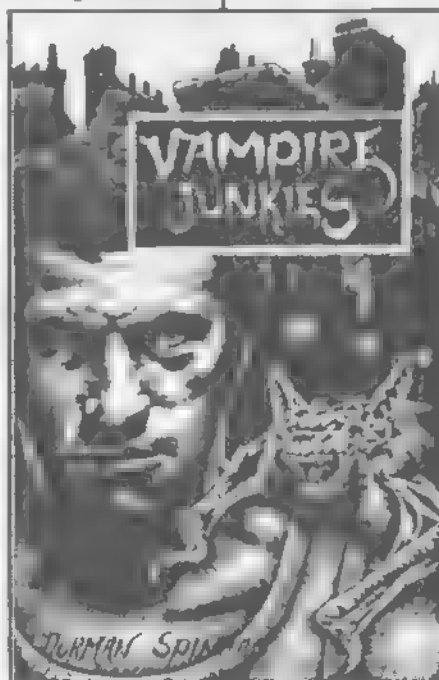
horrified repulsion when he discovers the true cause for his physical reaction. Once the pair has reconciled their new dual desires, they proceed to perform a public service of sorts by preying on New York's junkie community.

Throughout, Spinrad takes every opportunity to vent his wit:

"...I'm floatin' groovy, and now I'm just kinda sip-pin' at the last few drops just for the taste, know what I mean. And Vlad, he's suckin' away across the neck from me like a happy little baby, makin' these sweet little gurgling sounds, feelin' no pain, just like two little kids sharin' the same malt, kinda romantic-like inna sappy teen-age kinda way..."

"I smile at him. 'Not so bad, hey? Better than a poke through the heart with a sharp stick..."

Since this story recently appeared in *Tomorrow* magazine, which likely has a greater circulation than this chapbook, I'm not sure why this story warranted reprinting in book form (there's no indication that this version is any different from the one that appeared in *Tomorrow*). Nonetheless, if you're a vampire and/or a Spinrad fan, and you missed this tale's original incarnation, then this one could well be of interest.



Smoke of the Snake

by Carl Jacobi

Fedogan & Bremer, 1994; 212 pgs.; \$28
700 Washington Ave. SE, Ste. 50,
Minneapolis, MN 55414

★ 1/2

Some reviews are tougher to write than others. This is one of the tough ones. That's because I really admire Fedogan & Bremer's publishing pro-

gram, filling the niche of publishing work by (or in the style of) classic authors of yesteryear, a niche abandoned several years ago by Arkham House; and—because I've admired Jacobi's work in the past—evocative tales such as "The Face in the Wind," "The Unpleasantness at Carver House," and "Revelations in Black."

However, this is the fourth collection of Jacobi's short fiction (the first three having been published by the aforementioned Arkham), and this volume is ample proof that the best of the author's inventory was exhausted long ago. Most of the stories—including several published in the '70s and apparently written that recently—are hopelessly dated, featuring implausible characters, unlikely dialog, and inconceivable scenarios. There's unfortunately very little here that the contemporary reader can take seriously. Consider, "Test Case," in which an advanced alien race conducting a study of a small Earth town supposedly needs to install a fake phone booth in order to communicate with their operatives.

Among the better tales are "The Tunnel," a claustrophobic piece involving a Central American excavation project where workers encounter a nasty creature from Aztec mythology, and "The Street That Wasn't There," a collaboration with Clifford Simak in which everything begins to vanish, leaving the narrator trapped in his rapidly diminishing corner of the world. This collection also receives extra credit for the beautiful four-color jacket art by Jon Arfstrom, and the high quality (as always with F&B books) materials and binding. If you're an F&B collector, or a Jacobi fan, you'll obviously want this book; otherwise...

Mysteries of the Word

by Stanley Wiater

Crossroads Press, 1994; 20 pgs.; \$15
P.O. Box 10433, Holyoke, MA 01041-2033

★★

This is the first title I've reviewed from Crossroads Press, a relatively new publisher with previous chapbooks by Andrew Vachss, Joe Lansdale, and Nancy Collins to their credit. Additionally, this is the first piece of fiction that I've read from Stan Wiater, who should be well known to TSF readers for his plethora of fine interviews, a couple of which have appeared in these very pages



(John Russo in our *Night Of The Living Dead Special* and Alan Clark in TSF #14).

Mysteries of the Word is a slim, nicely-produced chapbook, limited to 250 copies and featuring three typically demented Gahan Wilson illustrations, an introduction by Jack Ketchum, and signatures from author, artist, and introducer. As for the story, it's more cute than chilling, but is certainly nicely done and makes for an entertaining diversion. The plot concerns a young boy named Paul who sneaks into a girls bathroom and espys a strange word printed on the wall. Paul's repeated queries about the word to various adults only serve to draw increasingly irate reactions and get the boy into deeper and deeper trouble. For a hint of where all this is leading, compare the story title to the title of a certain thematic collection by Robert Bloch. This is fun, if a bit lightweight,

stuff.

Writer of the Purple Rage

by Joe R. Lansdale

CD Publications, 1994; 304 pgs.; \$25 trade; \$60 ltd.

P.O. Box 18433, Baltimore, MD 21237

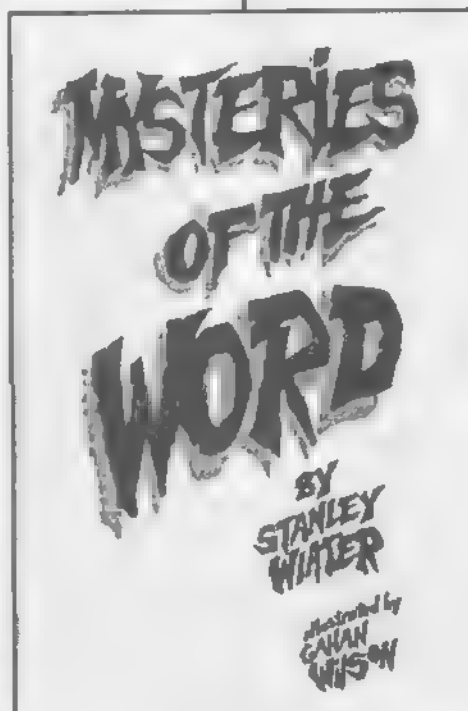
★★1/2

In his introduction to this, his third collection of short stories, Joe Lansdale states:

"What may be different about future stories is perhaps I've said all I have to say about the extremes of the dark side....I'm no longer shining a glaring light on those shadows, making the things that live there scuttle for cover.

I'm becoming too familiar with them. They're starting to yawn when I show up..."

As much as I've admired Lansdale's work in the past, I'd have to agree with that statement—sort of (I'll explain in a second). Some of his stories here are like familiar riffs sampled from earlier songs—they're beginning to shift from comforting familiarity to grating repetition. The only problem is, the stories that strike me that way are not the dark tales that Joe seems to be referring to in his intro, but rather the wacky, silly stories he seems to be turning to more and more these days. To me, stories like "Steppin' Out,



Summer '68," "Mister Weedeater," "The Diaper," and "Godzilla's Twelve Step Program" are throwaway fluff, entertaining but empty. The exceptions I can see amongst Lansdale's stories of this type are "Drive-In Date" and "Bubba-ho-tep," which both spend more time juxtaposing darkness with the humor, and thus seem to work better.

Ah, well. So Joe may be forsaking the material that I enjoy for the type that I can barely stomach—what the hell do I know? He'll probably win awards and sell millions of copies. Nonetheless, my favorite tales here are those with a very dark tinge to them, such as "Pilots," which concerns a group of deranged former Civil Air Patrol members who were horribly disfigured in an accident and are now out to exact revenge. Or "The Cold, Dark Time," a futuristic tale in a war-torn time, with a punch line that strikes like a rock-fist to the solar plexus. And then there are "The Phone Woman" and "Incident on and off a Mountain Road," both of which are still as powerful and memorable now as they were when they appeared in *Night Visions* a few years ago.

Lansdale fans will undoubtedly want this collection, but I'll be surprised if they find it to be as striking a body of work as that collected in *By Bizarre Hands*.

Return To Derleth

Edited by James P. Roberts

White Hawk Press, 1993; 74 pgs.; \$7

950 Jenifer St., Madison, WI 53703

★★

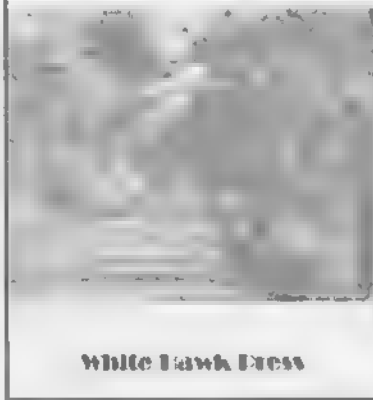
This digest-sized tribute offers a number of essays on August Derleth, who should be well known to *TSF* readers both as a genre writer of some repute and as co-founder of Arkham House (see Sam Moskowitz' article on page 88—the second in a series—for more info on Derleth).

I found the most interesting of the essays to be those by Mike Ashley and Steve Sneyd. Ashley's article concerns Derleth's admiration for, and informal representation of, a number of British writers. Fascinating anecdotal bits are provided regarding Derleth's interaction with Algernon Blackwood, H. Russell Wakefield, Denys Val Baker, and Colin Wilson, among others. Ashley pulls all his pieces together to form a convincing argument of Derleth's Anglophilic nature.

Return to Derleth

Selected Essays

edited by James P. Roberts



White Hawk Press

Sneyd's piece, although far briefer, is likewise intriguing in its coverage of Derleth's role as editor, publisher, and promoter of macabre poetry.

There are also essays on Derleth's Walden books, his Sac Prairie saga, and his own poetry, among others. Some nice illustrations by Eugene Gryniewicz are sprinkled throughout, rounding out this nicely-done package.

Tales Of The Grotesque

by L.A. Lewis

Ghost Story Press, 1994; 130 pgs.

BM Wound; London WC1N 3XX; England; Fax: 011-44-081-520-8876

★★★

The latest exhumation from Ghost Story Press is this remarkable collection of eleven tales by the elusive L.A. Lewis, a talented writer who briefly rose to some prominence in the UK in the '30s. As

GSP's Richard Dalby explains in his captivating introduction, Lewis subsequently experienced a bout with mental illness and ceased to write. The author then proceeded to sink into obscurity until GSP issued this collection, which reproduces the ten stories from the original *Tales Of The Grotesque* along with one other previously uncollected tale.

Unlike much of the fiction from his day, Lewis' work is still eminently readable, and often features non-traditional terrors, as evidenced by tales such as the atmospheric "The Child," in which a woman apparently repeatedly kills her infant children. When the woman ultimately disappears, her abandoned house is cursed by a baby-creature that may be a spirit or may simply be a fierce, feral child. In "Lost Keep," a young man inherits an exquisitely detailed miniature castle and a magnifying glass, and soon finds himself transported to the castle. In "Haunted Air," a malignantly playful air creature spells doom for several pilots who venture into the creature's airspace.

As an added bonus, the book features a beautiful new dustjacket by Steven Stapledon, whose signature adorns every jacket.

I also want to make a brief mention of Ghost Story Press' previous book, *Those Whom The Old Gods Love* by Harvey Peter Sucksmith. This book is a slight departure for GSP in that it is not some unjustly forgotten and unreprinted collection from decades past, but rather a brand new collection of tales written in the tradition of classic older writers such as M.R. James. This book is unfortunately already out of



jacket art for *Tales Of The Grotesque*

print, but it's a beautifully produced piece of work, and many of the stories read like perfect period pieces.

If you have an appreciation for vintage ghost and supernatural tales of yesteryear, you'll love *Tales Of The Grotesque, Those Whom The Old Gods Love*, and virtually everything else from GSP. Beware though—this publisher's print runs are extremely small and their books are known to go out of print extremely quickly.

Nameless Sins

by Nancy A. Collins

Gauntlet Press, 1994; 430 pgs.; Sgd. & Ltd. \$60

309 Powell Rd., Springfield, PA 19064

★★★1/2

In the past, when I've talked with my co-editors Peter and John about books that we'd potentially like to publish under the Deadline Press imprint, a Nancy Collins collection came up on more than one occasion. Obviously we've been beaten to the punch, and obviously, since this was a book that I was interested in publishing, it should come as no surprise that I enjoyed this collection.

This collection of 24 tales amply illustrates Collins' range of skills. From her surprisingly good first sale "The Dreamclown" through her most recent tales, it's clear that Collins has a real ear for dialog, a flair for crafting unex-

pected twists, and an appreciation of the bizarre.

Witness "Freaktent," a close-up of the seamy side of carny life that would have certainly impressed Tod Robbins. The complete lack of humanity displayed by a "breeder and seller" of freaks is at least as frightening as any supernatural creation could ever be. Speaking of which...viewing all of Collins' short fiction under one roof, I was surprised to realize just how few stories *do* feature the supernatural. There are a few, but for the most part it seems the author prefers horrors of the human kind.

Other memorable tales include: "The Two-Headed Man," a strange, sad—but ultimately redeeming—look at shortcomings, prejudice and loneliness; "Necrophile," in which a man obsessed with death, and whose habits include concocting inebriating, non-lethal doses of Strychnine, comes face-to-face with the incarnation of his heart's desire; "Speedfreaks With Guns," a chilling up-close-and-personal look at a truly insane individual.

There is perhaps a little more "filler" quality material here than I would have expected, but all in all this is a very good collection, and a real impressive debut for Gauntlet Press, which has previously been known for the anti-censorship magazine *Gauntlet*. I do question the lack of a more reasonably priced trade edition—Collins does have a loyal following, but \$60 is a lot to ask of them—but perhaps there's a paperback edition planned that I'm not aware of.

Book Reviews

Night Relics

by James Blaylock

Ace, 1994; 312 pgs.; \$18.95

★★★

Reviewed by Bob Morrish

Blaylock, past winner of a Philip K. Dick award and a World Fantasy Award, and a generally renowned author of several fantasy novels (the distorted-reality, Tim Powers type, not the "guys in tights" type) here offers an interesting change of pace: a straight-forward ghost story, and a darned good one at that.

The plot of *Night Relics* is relatively simple: Peter Travers is a recent divorcee who's moved to a sparsely-populated canyon in the surprisingly rural reaches of Orange County. When his ex-wife and son inexplicably disappear after visiting him, and shortly thereafter the bodies of a woman and a boy are briefly sighted (before also disappearing) at the bottom of a precipice in a nearby canyon, Peter fears the worst. However, when the latter duo begins to reappear—seen wandering the canyons at night before vanishing anew—it becomes apparent that they are not Peter's son and ex-wife, and it also seems clear that they are ghosts. The majority of the unfolding plot is then concerned with twin mysteries: what really happened to Peter's son and ex-wife?; who are the ghosts and what is their *raison d'être*?

Although Blaylock unravels the mysteries in a tantalizing fashion, and develops some interesting sub-plots, the

real strength of this book is in its excellent characterizations. In addition to Peter, who's approaching middle-age bearing a confusing and sometimes contradictory mass of emotions, Blaylock creates the following fascinating cast of characters: Peter's girlfriend Beth, who has a son of her own—to whom Peter is rapidly becoming a surrogate father; Klein, a local businessman who has some designs—fiscally motivated and not necessarily legal—on the various properties in the canyon where Peter resides; Pomeroy, a slimy operative hired to help acquire the canyon properties, whose impromptu fantasies and voyeuristic tendencies make him particularly interesting, and irritating; Ackroyd, a long-time Canyon resident who's able to cast some illumination on the background of the ghosts.

In sum, Blaylock infuses a relatively unexceptional storyline with dynamic characters, resulting in a fresh take on the ghost story which should prove very satisfying to both Blaylock fans and new readers alike.

Darkness on the Ice

by Lois Tilton

Pinnacle, 1993; \$4.50

★★★

Review by William D. Gagliani

A vampire working—temporarily—for the SS is at the heart of this World War II thriller, another welcome cross-genre hybrid that ripples with menace.

Sent to Greenland to guard the Luftwaffe weather station, Wolff is guaranteed a four-month night. With such appealing sunless conditions, a vampire in quest of his ancestral lands (now held by the Germans) can't afford to pass up such an assignment. Wolff is given a flight crew to "beef up" the small station contingent and, no surprise here, to provide extra supplies of fresh blood in case the expected American attackers never show.

Soon a tense game begins, with a blood-crazed Wolff trapped between his own suspicious men and the American sled-dog patrols indeed dispatched to locate and destroy the weather station. While feeding ruthlessly on both, Wolff faces impending betrayal that threatens to maroon him on the ice — ironically forcing him to preserve the lives of his enemies in order to survive. Realistically, the irony is not lost on this resilient, somehow admirable — but still fearsome — protagonist.

This novel is a "chiller" in the true sense. The research is thorough and engrossing, and background on dog-handling and Arctic survival is quite convincing.

Tilton deserves applause for helping create a new branch of vampire mystique (Robert McCammon's *The Wolf's Hour* did somewhat the same for werewolf lore). Her creation is pointedly neither romantic nor erotic — Wolff prefers a quick blade to the neck over the more traditional fangs-in-the-jugular. Pragmatic about his motives, he is merely driven to horrible deeds by an uncontrollable need, and in the end he is just as exploited and expendable as the humans upon which he preys.

The Long Lost

by Ramsey Campbell
TOR hardcover, 1994

★★★★

Reviewed by Simon MacCulloch

The Long Lost recalls one of its author's best short stories, "The Depths" (1982). There, Campbell explored the theme of the scapegoat by raising the question of a crime writer's complicity in a series of depraved murders which seemed to derive in part from the writer's own imagination. In *The Long Lost*, Campbell develops the scapegoat theme further, through the ancient superstition of sin-eating. Both works are extraordinarily disquieting, due not only to the power with which they convey a sense of evil set loose in the world, but more crucially to the fact that they make the act of reading them feel like complicity in an "ultimate sin" towards an appreciation of which they are driving us.

The supernatural element in *The Long Lost* is the premise that the practice of sin-eating really worked, and one sin-eater has survived from the times when the custom was prevalent into the present day. This person is discovered in a remote Welsh cottage by two vacationers, David and Joelle Owain, who take her home with them under the misapprehension that she is a distant relative. A barbecue gives her the opportunity she has been seeking to redistribute the sins she has eaten among the Owains' neighbours.

At this point, the supernatural has already retreated to

the background, and the tensions that Campbell has set up within the Owains' social circle swell into a range of vintage sins—anger, despair, jealousy, falsehood, lust, envy and avarice—which conspire with circumstances to obliterate the lives and personalities of his characters. Most of the latter are sympathetic but nondescript, their woes commonplace to the point of banality; Campbell is not concerned here with manifesting warped psyches, but with showing how the oppressiveness of what may be transitory emotional states can reduce lives to irredeemable meaninglessness.

"Meaningless" becomes a refrain, backed by Campbell's characteristic use of verbal interchange to generate ambiguity, irony and confusion, and juxtaposed with the equally characteristic sense by the novel's central character that a superhuman meaning is about to reveal itself. In the end, the sin-eater gives David a taste of omniscience which Campbell associates with Original Sin. This is the natural culmination of a process of acquisition of "forbidden knowledge" in relation to "sin" that the Owains' profession as freelance house renovators has involved them in: "I suppose everyone has something to hide, but you'd be amazed what people don't mind us knowing about them or maybe want us to know..."

The Long Lost shows how the roles of innocent bystander, voyeur, confessor, and sin-eater/scapegoat/saviour merge. Campbell has not habitually provided the emotional equivalent of car wrecks for us to gawk at in his fiction, but reading *The Long Lost*, as we realize that another character is about to have his or her life crushed in cruelly detailed close-up, we are forced to acknowledge that, like the Owains, we are voyeurs of private misery. And when we recognise that by indulging our compulsion to observe the worst in human nature and experience we are sharing the search for a totality of knowledge that opened the eyes of Adam and Eve, we can only be grateful for David's final perception: "If this was the ultimate sin, he would have said it was no sin at all."

The Orchid Eater

by Marc Laidlaw
St. Martins, 1994; 282 pgs.; \$19.95

★★ 1/2

Reviewed by Bob Morrish

From the author of three previous satirical SF novels (most recently *Kalifornia*) comes this essentially mainstream novel with dark undertones.

Mike James, a 15-year-old who's recently moved to a new neighborhood in his secluded town of Bohemia Bay, has fallen in with a new group of friends, some of whom are a bit on the seedy side. Following an impromptu raid on the house of their rival faction's leader, Kevin's gang finds themselves pursued by their rivals, and some of them take refuge in Kevin's new house. To my mind, it's in this section of the book that Laidlaw is at his best. At this early stage of the story, much is still unclear: what's the true nature of Kevin's newfound friends?; what is the exact

chronological and physical setting of the story?; most importantly, what is the real potential for violence? With so much left ambiguous, the reader is left with a vacillating sense of whether this confrontation could end in harmless name-calling and ineffectual blows, or death and dismemberment.

From there, the plot primarily focuses on Mike and three other characters: Sal Diaz, who's a martial arts practitioner, homosexual bordering on pedophile, and leader of the gang under attack in the aforementioned scene; Sal's brother Lupe, who suffered a viciously cruel torturing and disfigurement several years ago, and who has just showed up in Bohemia Bay, wearing scars that are both mental and physical; Hawk, a biker-turned-preacher who's the symbolic leader of Mike's gang. It gradually becomes apparent that Mike is in real danger, as multiple murders rock the local community and spike the tension.

The Orchid Eater struck me as a Young Adult tale rewritten for adults. There are some definite strong points here—particularly in Laidlaw's depiction of Lupe's bubbling, just-beneath-the-surface torment—but overall I was a bit disappointed by the end result, perhaps because I had such high hopes based on word of mouth notice of Laidlaw's substantial skills.

Snow White, Blood Red
edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling
Avon, 1993, 411 pages; \$4.99 pb
★★★

Reviewed by Wayne Edwards

Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling are the well-respected editors of the annual anthology series *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* (St. Martin's). In this series, their keen insights into the genre make the choices genuinely representative of the finest stories being published. For their efforts, they have received much deserved recognition, including a World Fantasy Award.

Snow White, Blood Red plainly exhibits the editors' talents. The book collects retellings of classic fairy tales (along with a few entirely new ones) written by a very diverse group of contributors. You'll find that Datlow and Windling have chosen writers of fantasy, horror, children's books, science fiction, and poets and cartoonists to fill these pages. While the settings for many of the stories have been modernized, there is a return to the hard-edged nature of fairy tales of old. There is also a preponderance of sexuality expressed in the book, a theme common in the earlier, but not recent, versions. This is an issue both editors address in their separate introductions, and in a way they have set out to re-concentrate the watered-down treatments given to folklore by puritans over the last couple hundred years.

But that is not all the book does. It brings to light some fairy tales that are not very well-known. To give just one example, Steve Rasnic Tem's story "Little Poucet" is a take-off on Perrault's "Le petit Poucet," a late seventeenth century story I had never heard of before I read *Snow White, Blood*

Red. Tem cunningly creates a bizarre fantasy of viciously casual betrayal and brutality that is fascinating to read. Like many of the tales in this anthology, Tem's expert work makes you want to look up the original for comparison, a task which could turn out to be no mean feat.

Snow White, Blood Red is an intriguing collection. One might expect a certain amount of redundancy in retelling old stories, but none exists here. Instead, the anthology leaves you wanting more, which is fine because another collection of fairy tales edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, called *Black Thorn, White Rose*, appeared recently from Morrow/AvoNova. Once you have given the first book a whirl, I am sure you won't be able to resist the second.

Sacrifice
by John Farris
TOR, 1994, 320 pages; \$21.95 hc
★★★ 1/2

Reviewed by Bob Morrish

Although I've long been a Farris fan, the odds of my liking this new novel were not good. The last Farris novel that I had read, *The Axeman Cometh*, was by far his worst, an embarrassing mish-mash of disparate elements, and the story upon which *Sacrifice* is based ("Good Morning, Daddy" from *Night Visions* 8) failed to do much for me in its shorter form. However, it took only a few dozen pages of *Sacrifice* to convince me that Farris was back on track—and at the top of his form.

The first-person narrative in *Sacrifice* is divided between three characters: Greg Walker, a middle-aged appliance store manager and family man; his daughter Sharissa, an attractive and athletic high school senior; Detective C.G. Butterbaugh, a small-town Georgia cop who meets the Walkers while investigating the accidental shooting of Greg by some local kids. Greg's unexpected and robust recovery from his brutal head wound is but the first of several strange occurrences, followed by the appearance of an elderly Canadian woman who's convinced that Greg is her former husband! Throughout the tale, Farris displays a remarkable ability to introduce unexpected revelations, one after another—especially early in the book, while Greg is narrating, and especially when those revelations concern the narrator himself. The reader comes to distrust the narrator, not because of any questions about his sanity, but because of his duplicitous nature.

The narratives of Greg and Butterbaugh are by far the strongest, sandwiching a somewhat listless middle section narrated by Sharissa. The plot, which is greatly enhanced by the alternating viewpoint, ultimately centers on the reenactment of an ancient Mayan ritual designed to convey immortality, and some dogged detective work by Butterbaugh, whose roly-poly physique and droll manner make him a most unlikely—yet most welcome—hero.

Sacrifice is an excellent re-emergence for Farris, in which the author displays the same kind of talent that distinguished earlier works such as *Fiends*, *The Fury*, and *All Heads Turn When The Hunt Goes By*.

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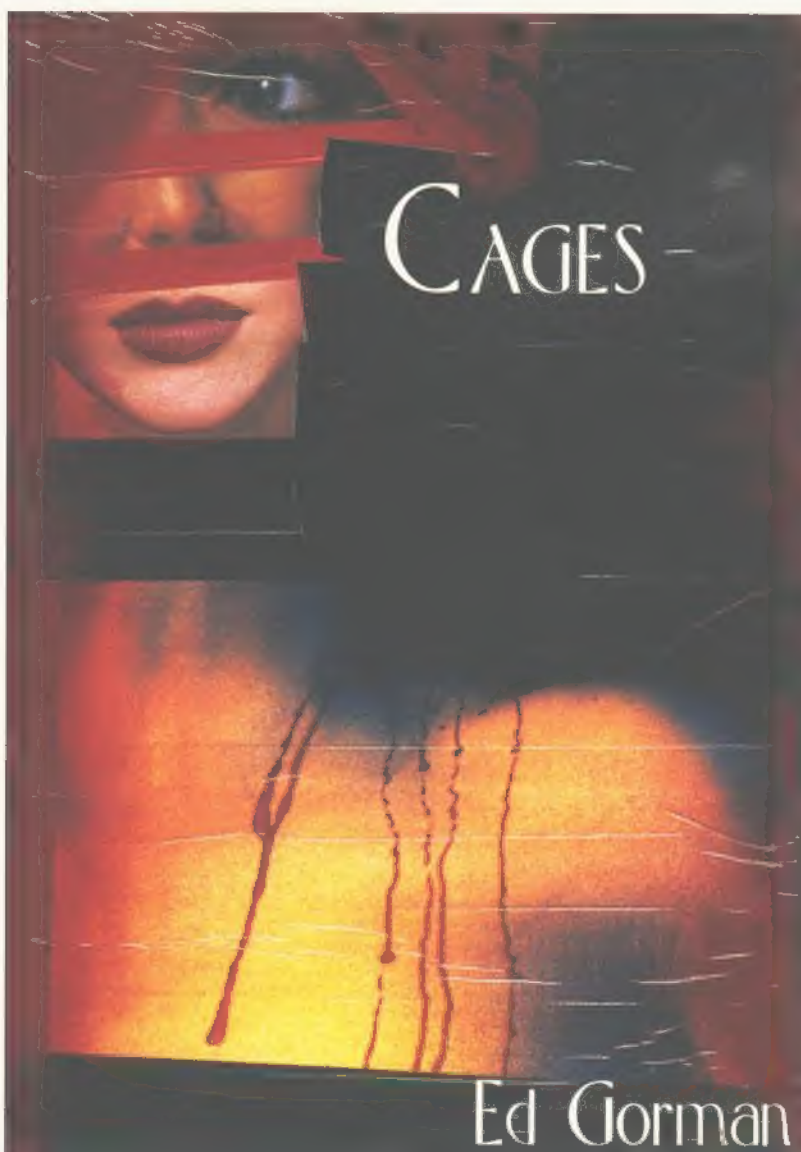
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